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The International Dimension of the SPD and the PCI: Europe, the Cold War and Détente

Abstract

This thesis compares the foreign policy course undertaken by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in the 1960s and 1970s. The thesis analyses where the foreign policy of the two parties converges and diverges, especially with regard to international détente, security policies, the Eastern bloc and European integration. The choice of a broad time frame is justified by the diverse timing and junctures of the SPD's and the PCI's revisionist course.

Departing from the assumption that both SPD and PCI were characterised by their national roots and ambitions, the thesis seeks to arrive at party overlapping trends and conclusions as to how political parties address and overcome national and international constraints in spite of ideological divergences.

One aim of the comparison is to examine policy revisionism and analyse its origins and motivations. Revisionism has its origins in a number of interrelated factors which are often not mutually exclusive. Policy shifts are every so often caused by ideological reconsiderations or a rethinking of, and adaptation to political, economic and social circumstances. The comparative method allows one to make general assumptions and draw parallels about the origins of revisionism, and relate them, where possible, to wider sections of the Western European Left. This process which occurred in the wider context of de-ideologisation was not distinctive to Italian communism or German social democracy but can be observed by examining Western European parties of the Left in general.

CONTENTS

Introduction

This thesis compares the foreign policy course undertaken by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in the 1960s and 1970s. The thesis analyses where the foreign policy of the two parties converges and diverges, especially with regard to international détente, security policies, the Eastern bloc and European integration.

The methodological approach chosen here needs some explanation and justification. Historical comparisons are characterised by the fact that they analyse systematically the similarities and differences of two or more historical phenomena. The analysis is then used as a basis to arrive at more general statements and assumptions about historical experiences, processes and structures.[1]

The SPD and the PCI have been chosen, firstly, for the fact that they were the two largest parties of the left operating in pluralist democracies during the Cold War, in terms of adherence figures and votes. The comparative analysis produces considerable similarities of the issues which the two political forces addressed. After the Second World War, Germany's and Italy's foreign policy became firmly imbedded in the West as a prerequisite to regain some of their lost national sovereignty. As a result of the countries' most recent history, neither could hope to initiate a truly independent national foreign policy. Military adherence to the Atlantic Alliance and economic integration with the West thus became paramount in regaining a minimal say in international affairs. The emerging Cold War and deteriorating East-West relations had a profound impact on Germany geographically, and hence could only but affect all national political players. In Italy, the Cold War clearly exacerbated domestic

[1] For the pros and cons of the comparative method in international history, see Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, 'Historischer Vergleich: Methoden, Aufgaben, Probleme. Eine Einleitung', in Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (eds), *Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse internationaler vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung* (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 1996), pp. 9-39.

contrasts and confrontations on the already heterogeneous domestic scenery. The emerging Cold War drastically altered the domestic scene within which both political forces operated, and determined their choices considerably until the end of superpower hostilities at the beginning of the 1990s.

A comparability of two or more phenomena is justified primarily by the main research questions. Besides that, the objects of comparison need to share a minimum of commonality and comparing always also means examining the differences.[2] The comparative approach here is justified through the underlying relevance of the thesis' research questions and working hypothesis: it is precisely the differences in nature and ideology of the two political parties that allow me to arrive at more general assumptions about the origins of policy revisionism and re-thinking, in spite of ideological motivations. Hence, the comparison of the two, in many ways undoubtedly diverse political forces, provides fertile terrain for more general statements and conclusions on parties' revisionism and policy choices.

A second reason behind the choice of the cases is their common desire to become people's parties. In this context, I seek to examine the similarity of problems faced, the constraints of political power as well as the demands of electoral politics, which the two parties had faced since 1945 and relate them to foreign policy choices and shifts. Both parties acquired the features of government-oriented, pragmatic parties of the Left, though in part at diverse stages and to a varied extent. This, in practice, entailed that the SPD's and the PCI's policy shifts were considerably motivated by greater pragmatism and consensus-seeking policies encouraged by a pronounced electoral orientation. Of course, it is a commonality of virtually all political parties that they continue to respond overwhelmingly to national electorates but also, in systems of proportional representation, to the requirement of forming coalitions and

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[2] Ibid., p. 25.

more often than not in response to their political opponents on the domestic political scene. In systems of proportional representation, political parties so often do not 'win' elections on their own terms. Their entry into government is often accomplished because they secure the support of a coalition partner. At least as far as Western democracies are concerned, one should bear in mind that political parties are constantly struggling to enhance their own distinctive 'profile' whilst seeking coalition partners and securing their own parliamentary survival. The patterns of the approaching and dealing with the demands of parliamentary competition, electoral interests, national constraints and international obligations run like a red thread throughout this study. Admittedly, it is impossible to deny that the overall historical development of the SPD and the PCI was also characterised by fundamental differences. For example, despite its remarkable strength and size, the PCI never managed to re-enter government after its expulsion in 1947. However, one cannot deny that the PCI's approaching and dealing with the challenges of the parliamentary system and the attempt to come to power bear some remarkable resemblance to the development of the SPD.

In many ways, a comparison between the PCI and its French counterpart, the French Communist Party (PCF), would have been the more obvious choice; or analogously, a comparative analysis of the SPD and the Italian Socialists' revisionism from the mid-1950s.[3] With respect to the former, a vast amount of literature exists already, generally arguing that the PCI was a more reform-oriented, pragmatic party of the Western European Left in direct

[3] As far as the post-war period is concerned, the SPD and the Italian Socialists (PSI) are dealt with in comparison only in broader studies on the Western European Left. See, for example, Stephen Padgett and William E. Paterson, *A History of Social Democracy in Postwar Europe* (London and New York: Longman, 1991); Herbert Kitschelt, *The Transformation of European Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); William E. Paterson and Alastair H. Thomas, *Social democratic parties in Western Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997). For the pre-war period see Katharina Keller, *Modell SPD? Italienische Sozialisten und deutsche Sozialdemokratie bis zum ersten Weltkrieg* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1994).

comparison with its French counterpart.[4] Despite periods of rudimentary re-thinking, the PCF fundamentally remained a pro-Stalinist, dogmatic Western European communist party, which maintained throughout the Cold War a very high degree of loyalty to the world communist movement. The events of 1968 marked a crucial juncture in the PCI's internationalism, as entailed in the party's foreign policy perception. 1968 and its aftermath presented a decisive step for the PCI to further its previous, theoretically elaborated changes (as entailed in the notion of 'polycentrism') of its internationalism and give them a more concrete context.[5]

It can be assumed that, during the Cold War, the ties which the PCI maintained with Moscow affected the party's domestic position. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the Soviet myth and prestige as victorious power and liberator of Nazi Germany had contributed enormously to the PCI's political growth, as far as adherents and voters were concerned. Much of the PCI's initial success was owed to its organic link with the USSR. In the early post-war years, reference to the Soviet Union and the international communist movement provided one source of legitimisation on the domestic level; the other fundamental source of legitimisation represented the communist share of victory over Italian fascism. The rising Cold War atmosphere soon led to a climate of a 'national Cold War' in Italy. Much as Germany became geographically and ideologically separated, Italy too became ideologically divided along Cold War lines. Italian political parties have always tended to search for external legitimisation. As far as the PCI was concerned, the focus on sources of legitimation shifted significantly in the course of the party's post-war history.

While devoting loyalty to Moscow's foreign policy interests, the PCI developed national interests and ambitions that were increasingly incompatible with Soviet hegemony over the international communist movement. In the course of the PCI's foreign policy revisionism and

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[4] See, for example, Donald L.M. Blackmer and Sidney Tarrow (eds), *Communism in Italy and France* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975).

[5] While in the case of the PCF, the developments of 1968 seem to have led to a far-reaching realignment of the party with the world communist movement on Soviet terms.

implementation of its national road to socialism ('via italiana al socialismo'). greatest urgency was attributed to finding new international reference points which assured the PCI the much desired international and national legitimisation. From 1967, this was in part sought in the SPD. The monolithic international communist movement which responded to the primacy of Soviet power policies was gradually replaced as the exclusive point of reference or external legitimisation. New convergences on the Western European level were sought across a wide political spectrum, in spite of prevailing ideological divergences. In this the SPD played a role that should not be underestimated. Internally, the PCI's ambitious domestic proposal as entailed in the 'historic compromise' strategy was inspired by the first 'great coalition' in post-war Germany. For the PCI, the SPD not only presented a real source of inspiration, but increasingly also a source of legitimisation. Internationally, the SPD's Eastern course was observed by the PCI with greatest interest and anticipation. The PCI's polycentrism as a notion of relations amongst communist states could in turn improve relations between Germany and the East and thereby reinforce the SPD's Ostpolitik. Changes in Soviet dominated Eastern Europe could not leave the PCI, or the SPD, unaffected. The Cold War and détente therefore mark the context and framework against which the two parties' foreign policy course and shifts will be analysed.

The comparative method here does not distinguish between the 'contrasting type' and the 'universalising type' but applies both where necessary for the argument.[6] The underlying assumption of this thesis is that it is precisely the relative diversity of the two parties that allows one to make useful comparisons, identifying the causes of policy shifts.

One aim of the comparison is to examine policy revisionism and analyse its origins and motivations. Revisionism has its origins in a number of interrelated factors which are often not mutually exclusive. Policy shifts are every so often caused by ideological reconsiderations

[6] For the various types of approaches see Haupt and Kocka, 'Historischer Vergleich', p. 11.

or a rethinking of, and adaptation to political, economic and social circumstances.[7] The comparative method allows one to make general assumptions and draw parallels about the origins of revisionism, and relate them, where possible, to wider sections of the Western European Left. This process which occurred in the wider context of de-ideologisation was not distinctive to Italian communism or German social democracy but can be observed by examining Western European parties of the Left in general. Due to the diverse timing and junctures of the SPD's and the PCI's revisionist course it is necessary to choose a relatively broad time frame. This is often required when adopting this kind of comparative method.[8]

The scholarly literature on both the SPD and the PCI is vast. The wealth of material on the PCI is certainly exceptional. No other Western European, non-governing, communist party has been subject to such manifold research. From a comparative perspective, the existing literature generally places the PCI in the context of the international communist movement, or its dubious relations with Moscow. If analysed from a comparative approach, the PCI is usually examined in relation with its counterparts in Western Europe. As a member of the Socialist International (SI), the SPD is generally analysed in the context of the European socialist movement.[9]

In much of the literature, the Cold War is the prime and often sole explanatory prism through which to understand communist party behaviour. Comparing the PCI with the SPD bears the advantage of demonstrating that this was not a typical communist phenomenon. The SPD was equally affected by the Cold War and a lot of its choices certainly have to be viewed in that

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[7] It should be noted that ideology will be used throughout in a more general sense and linked to belief and to identity.
[8] Haupt and Kocka, 'Historischer Vergleich', p. 25.
[9] See, for example, Johan Jeroen De Deken, 'The German Social Democratic Party', in Robert Ladrech and Philippe Marlière (eds), *Social Democratic Parties in the European Union: History, Organisation and Policies* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1999); Kevin Featherstone, *Socialist Parties and European Integration. A Comparative History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); Dietrich Orlow, *Common Destiny: A Comparative History of the Dutch, French, and German Social Democratic Parties, 1945-1969* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000).

context, nonetheless, neither party's behaviour can be exclusively accounted for by the bipolar world constellation.

The enormous literature produced by British and American scholars in the 1970s and 1980s readdressed the issue of national and international belonging of the PCI. An important work on the complex understanding of the interaction between the PCI's national and international belonging is Donald Blackmer's *Unity in Diversity*[10], which thoroughly analyses the permanent and often conflicting interests of the PCI. Indispensable to any analysis of the PCI is Donald Sassoon's *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*[11]; it places the PCI both in the national and international context, analysing the PCI's domestic and foreign policy strategies also from the perspective of the logic of the blocs. A classic work on the PCI and its relations with the Soviet Union is also Joan Barth Urban's *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*[12]. Many of the differences between the approaches to PCI history can be traced back to the question of whether this party should be studied as any other political party in the context of a pluralist party system, or if it was fundamentally different and hence required a specific approach. The two approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive and any comprehensive and thorough analysis of the behaviour of the PCI will have to study the party from within the Italian party spectrum without undermining its international belonging and constraints.

The SPD's foreign policy in the 1960s and the 1970s is also a well researched field. The existing literature is vast. Nonetheless a few works should be emphasised here, some of which will be critically addressed throughout the thesis. Arnulf Baring provides an important

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[10] Donald L.M. Blackmer, *Unity in Diversity. Italian Communism and the Communist World* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1968). See also Donald L.M. Blackmer, 'The International Strategy of the Italian Communist Party', in Donald L.M. Blackmer and Annie Kriegel (eds), *The International Role of the Communist Parties of Italy and France* (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1975).

[11] Donald Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party. From the Resistance to the Historic Compromise* (London: Frances Pinter, 1981).

[12] Joan Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party. From Togliatti to Berlinguer* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1986).

contribution to the analysis of the social-liberal Ostpolitik, despite its lack of references.[13] Haftedorn also gives valuable information about the genesis of Ostpolitik and places it in an international context.[14] A number of recently published monographs deal with Brandt's life and politics.[15] From a comparative perspective, the most profound analysis of Western European socialist, social democratic and communist parties is Donald Sassoon's *One Hundred Years of Socialism.*[16] A thorough analysis of the PCI's policies towards European integration in comparison with the SPD as well as the Communists' role in the SPD's Ostpolitik, is Heinz Timmermann's *I Comunisti italiani.*[17]

Given the wealth of research on both PCI and SPD, it is worthwhile asking whether there is room for a new approach to the subject and where this thesis differs and contributes to the scholarship on the foreign policy course of the two parties. This thesis provides the first systematic comparative analysis on the strategies of the PCI and the SPD and thereby attempts to open up new perspectives, to give insightful innovation and to provoke new research on familiar subjects. Timmermann's work, for example, is an important and original contribution to the history of the SPD and the PCI. However, it is incomplete as it focuses on European integration and SPD-PCI encounters over Ostpolitik exclusively. Here it is used as a

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[13] Arnulf Baring, *Machtwechsel. Die Ära Brandt-Scheel* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1984).
[14] Helga Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung. Zur Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1955-1982* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1983). A well researched work is Sarotte's *Dealing with the Devil. East Germany, Détente, and Ostpolitik, 1969-1973* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of Carolina Press, 2001). Sarotte, however, examines exclusively the East German interaction with both West Germany and the Soviets. As she mentions herself, it does not provide the West German view of interactions with East Germany and the United States. Topics such as the debate over Ostpolitik within the SPD, or the tensions between the SPD and its coalition partners, the attacks of the conservative West German press on Ostpolitik - all of which are important for his thesis - have not been dealt with.
[15] See, for example, Peter Merseburger, *Willy Brandt 1913-1992* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2004); Barbara Marshall, *Willy Brandt: A Political Biography* (Basingstoke, London: Macmillan Press, 1997); Brigitte Seebacher, *Willy Brandt* (München, Zürich: Piper, 2004). Given his role in the SPD and during the great coalition, it is also worth mentioning and addressing some of the existing literature on Herbert Wehner. See, for example, Christoph Meyer, *Herbert Wehner* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006); Wayne C. Thompson, *The Political Odyssey of Herbert Wehner* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1993) and for his role in the German Communist Party and his life in Moscow, see Reinhard Müller, *Herbert Wehner – Moskau 1937* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2004).
[16] Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London: Fontana Press, 1997).
[17] Heinz Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani* (Bari: De Donato Editore, 1974).

basis and will be expanded to other aspects of the foreign policy domain, whereby I seek, whenever possible, to place the strategies of the SPD and the PCI in the wider European context. The comparative method here is particularly revealing for a number of reasons. Those who look at one party exclusively, tend to attribute all changes and shifts to that party, without analysing it in the wider context of policy revisionism. Drawing parallels between the SPD's and the PCI's foreign policy shifts and turns is also insightful in as much as it draws attention to previously neglected areas, such as the SPD's Deutschland Plan and acceptance of NATO. It also offers a more comprehensive understanding of the origins of revisionism and its motivations.

The existing manifold literature on the PCI's history has so often focused on the complex relation of the Italian Communist Party with the Soviet Union and the world communist movement. The present study does not ignore this undeniably central element of the PCI's identity. By virtue of its membership of a Soviet-dominated international Communist movement, the PCI was also a Stalinist party. But by virtue of its involvement in a democratic capitalist West European country, the PCI was also a reformist social-democratic party. And by virtue of its position as a minority opposition party operating in a hostile environment, the PCI was also a constitutional-liberal party upholding civil liberties.[18] Any comprehensive history of the PCI must sufficiently account for and deal with these differing aspects of PCI identity. A comparison with the SPD highlights striking similarities with the Western European, non communist, Left.

This thesis attempts to place the PCI's foreign policy strategies in the national and Western European context, without in any way intending to downplay the undeniably important internationalism and loyalty to the Soviet Union on the PCI's identity. It therefore seeks to avoid denouncing the importance of relations with Moscow or dependency on and belonging

[18] D. Sassoon, 'The PCI between 1948 and 1956: four perspectives on vol. VII of *Storia del PCI*', in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (1999), p. 392.

to the international communist movement, whilst attempting not to exaggerate the national context in complete disregard of ideological positions. Instead, one needs to contemplate both of these 'links' to fully conceptualise some of the party's most profound choices. Departing from the assumption that both SPD and PCI were characterised by their national roots and ambitions, the thesis seeks to arrive at party overlapping trends and conclusions as to how political parties address and overcome national and international constraints in spite of ideological divergences. It analyses the SPD's and the PCI's foreign policy revisionism and foreign policy course, by examining the domestic interplay, the national constraints and international obligations the two parties were confronted with.

Though the focus of this work is primarily on foreign policies, it is impossible to separate those from domestic issues. It is in fact one of the underlying hypothesis of this study that national policy ambitions and reflections were often, sometimes exclusively, responsible for the SPD's and the PCI's foreign policy reappraisals. Every so often, the two were inseparably intertwined and to understand the complexity of the issues of analysis, one needs to examine how far domestic considerations and ambitions were responsible in shaping the parties' foreign policy outlook. By building my analysis on two political forces deriving from different ideological camps, it is possible to illustrate that foreign policies are often a product of domestic power constellations and that ideology played an ever decreasing relevance in determining the international position of political forces.

Some problems of the comparative method should be mentioned here. Comparing always implies accounting for both, similarities *and* differences. Acknowledging convergences in some areas, does not deny the existence of fundamental divergences in others. A comparison does not attempt to seek convergences at all costs. In cases of clear contrast, the two parties will be dealt with separately and I will seek, if possible, to highlight the reasons for the lack of

analogies. I have tried to deal with the two parties simultaneously whenever possible. When at times the two parties are dealt with separately this is owed to the fact that the timing of the changes in party policies and strategies had frequently been diverse. This is a typical phenomenon of the comparative method. It should also not go unmentioned that every so often diametrically diverse strategies lay behind overtly similar positions. This thesis does not suggest that the two parties' foreign policy concepts (or the strategies behind them) were essentially the same, in complete disregard of prevailing dissimilarities between the two.

Keeping in mind these difficulties, the aim is to demonstrate that on the basis of key foreign policy aspects which the two parties were confronted with, such as the understanding and concepts of international détente, security policies, relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the United States, the Warsaw Pact and the international communist movement, European integration and unity, notable similarities can be produced. This is more so the case in terms of the SPD's and the PCI's reciprocal understanding of certain issues and consequently involved a similar handling of specific foreign policy aspects. Despite undeniable problems of comparative analyses, the choice of two parties from diverse political camps bears the advantage to illustrate party overlapping movements and trends.

The first and second chapter provide a general background of the SPD's and the PCI's strategy until the end of the 1950s. This entails a brief excursion to the period from the resistance to post-war reconstruction, giving a picture of the political systems and actors involved in both countries and of the foreign and domestic policy issues to be addressed at the time.

Chapter three examines the context against which the policy reappraisal vis-à-vis NATO took place. A common departing point of the two parties was the search for bipartisanship in foreign policy and accommodation of political power at home. The chapter deals with the

origins of the SPD's move from intransigence to bipartisanship in foreign policy and subsequent relations towards NATO and the United States. The PCI's endorsement of the military pact took place more than a decade later but was strikingly similar. The PCI's policy shift also occurred in the context of an overture to the Italian Christian Democratic Party (DC) in the midst of the 1970s. Both SPD and PCI had come to conclude that their march to governmental power would have to involve an acceptance of their countries key military obligations.

Chapter four will analyse the motivations for previous hostilities and subsequent support of economic integration with Western Europe. Europe and the integration process were viewed and approached in the context of Realpolitik; in ideological terms we witnessed a greater extent of consensus politics and the termination of divergences over principles. Both Italy and Germany were economically affected by Western Europe's significant post-war economic boom – which had owed its success not least to the impact of economic integration with the West. Both SPD and PCI came to acknowledge and positively embrace this process; even the timing marked a remarkable concurrence between the two parties.

Chapter five deals with the parallels and the complexities of the PCI's and SPD's foreign and domestic policy strategies, investigating the SPD's and the PCI's foreign policy choices and changes towards the East and the international communist movement as well as the two parties' 'originality' on the domestic level. Both parties shared a similar perception of international détente and peaceful coexistence that went well beyond the mere acceptance of the status quo. It also provides a systematic analysis of SPD-PCI encounters over Ostpolitik. The PCI presented itself as a credible 'mediator' in opening doors for talks with the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Moscow. The PCI played something of an intermediary role between the SPD, East Berlin and ultimately Moscow. SPD and PCI were unique in their

respective political 'camps'. The SPD, at the forefront of conducting its own independent and well respected foreign policy as entailed in Ostpolitik, the PCI as a distinctive 'Eurocommunist' party that held decreasingly little in common with the Soviet-dominated and monolithic international communist movement. On a national level, the chapter will analyse the domestic choices as entailed in the SPD's 'great coalition' and the PCI's 'historic compromise'.

For the purpose of clarity, chapter six will be divided into two parts. The first part will make sense of the paradox that whilst the period between 1968 and 1976 saw a remarkable convergence between the PCI and SPD as far as their concepts of détente, security policies and positions towards the Atlantic Alliance were concerned, in short a period in which the gap in terms of foreign policy differences shrank enormously, the distance the SPD officially sought from the PCI grew enormously in 1975/76. This study will place the PCI in the wider framework of Western fears of communist advances in Western Europe. Subject of analysis will be the economic summit meeting of the four powers held in Puerto Rico in June 1976, on which I intend to shed some new light on the basis of archival research, challenging the existing literature on the incident. The second part will investigate the positions of the two political forces towards the deteriorating East-West relations and the newly emerging armament race between the superpowers. The NATO dual-track provides a case study of the correlation of domestic constraints and international choices.

In terms of methodology, the sources used for the study of the two parties are of similar nature. These included party or sympathetic press, party congresses, protocols and resolutions, yearbooks and speeches, memoirs, and oral interviews, etc. With regard to archival sources, the study uses for the main part of the thesis material from both party achives, the SPD's

Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie (AdSD) in Bonn and the PCI party archive at the *Fondazione Istituto Gramsci* (APC) in Rome.

A few words should be said about the usefulness of archival sources. Parties like the SPD and PCI have attracted the attention of a vast amount of historians and political scientists and are well researched political forces. The likelihood that the party archives reveal anything sensational is rather minimal. In fact, political parties such as the SPD and the PCI have every interest in conveying their ideas to the widest public possible. Hence, party archives are unlikely to reveal new empirical material or particular party secrets. In short, party archives on their own, are not likely to produce any major revelations. They are useful when reconstructing a particular decision-making process and the role of all key players involved. Nonetheless it is the task of the historian to thoroughly study archival material and analyse the primary sources against the already existing research in the field.[19] As far as this thesis is concerned, the various archives were particular useful in the context of SPD-PCI encounters and the Puerto Rico incident. Here they disclosed a number of insights that have not been previously dealt with in the literature so that the thesis makes a particularly valuable contribution to the existing literature.

There exists a discrepancy between the sources used from both archives. This is due to the organisational structure of the two party archives and internal party structures. The top to bottom decision-making process characteristic of communist parties implies that policy choices were made in a closed leading circle. As far as the SPD is concerned, the decision-making process is more heterogeneous and not confined to a few individuals. Exempt from this was the period under Kurt Schumacher, first party leader, who had been widely characterised by an authoritarian-style leadership. With this exception, the reader should bear in mind that use will be made here of official party positions and policies which, however,

[19] See Haupt and Kocka, who problematise the usage of and reliance on secondary sources in historical comparisons, in 'Historischer Vergleich', p. 33.

does not imply that these were automatically and always unequivocally shared by the entire party. Inner party tensions are secondary for this work and beyond the scope of the thesis. They will only be dealt with where considered absolutely crucial. The thesis makes use of information from the deposits of Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt. Particularly noteworthy is also the printed edition *Willy Brandt: Berliner Ausgabe*, which is one of the first works to make ample use of Brandt's personal files preserved at the Willy Brandt archive at the *Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie*. These sources are accompanied by protocols and meetings from the SPD parliamentary faction. For the PCI, the thesis analyses sources of the party's leading circles such as central committee meetings, party publications and the deposit of Enrico Berlinguer for the 1970s. The SPD's weekly *Vorwärts* and the communist daily *L'Unità* were used for the main period of analysis, so were the theoretical organs *Die Neue Gesellschaft* and *Rinascita*. The findings on 'Puerto Rico' are supported by material from both the political archive of the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin and the National Archives in London.

Chapter 1

The strategy of the SPD and the PCI during the resistance and post-war reconstruction of Germany and Italy, 1944-1949

1.) The SPD, PCI and the resistance

In spite of key differences, the SPD and PCI converged on a variety of aspects, not least because the two countries and the political landscapes within which both parties operated were not that dissimilar. To start with one should analyse the strategies of the PCI and the SPD in the immediate post-war period. These can only be fully understood by considering where the two parties came from and some of the constraints they faced in the post-1945 period.

Both parties re-emerged after the Second Word War from years of clandestinity. Their experiences during those years had an enduring impact on the political identity of the two. The PCI and the SPD had similar experiences in the 1930s and 1940s. The Communists had been banned under Mussolini in 1926; the SPD was banned in 1933. During the Second World War, many SPD members spent years in concentration camps in Nazi Germany or in exile. Kurt Schumacher, who later became the party's uncontested post-war leader until his death in 1952, had spent ten years in concentration camps.

The experiences of many Italian Communists were similar. During most of the Fascist period, the PCI was outlawed and its leaders in prison or abroad. Many Communists had spent years in exile or were imprisoned under Mussolini and only re-emerged with the Allied occupation of Southern Italy. Palmiro Togliatti, the PCI's first post-war leader, had spent several years in exile in France and in Moscow (where he used radio broadcasts to guide the policy of the

PCI). In Italy, there was no armed resistance to speak of until 1943.[20] With the fall of Mussolini in 1943, the Italian resistance grew rapidly in speed and size. Although one cannot speak of a united resistance movement in Italy as such, the PCI was the key force behind the resistance effort. More importantly, the PCI gained enormous prestige from its role in the resistance and much of its character and post-war strategy derived from the experience in these years.

2.) Germany and Italy after the Second World War: the re-emergence of political parties

In May 1945 Germany had faced complete defeat and the country was divided by the Allies into an American, Soviet, British and French zone of occupation. In September 1944 it had already been agreed that Berlin should be placed under four-power control, and at the conferences of Teheran (28 November-1 December 1943) and Yalta (4-11 February 1945) there was a general agreement on the principle need and mutual task to demilitarise and democratise the country. Despite these vague statements, soon after the surrender of Germany, the clashes between the four occupying powers (over issues such as the redrawing of the German-Polish border, reparations and Germany's future political system) became prevalent.

The decision to allow the re-foundation of political parties in the West was also taken in response to Soviet initiatives and activities of the Communists in the Eastern sector. Prior to Allied approval, Schumacher, who immediately became the unchallenged post-war leader of the SPD, at once began the reorganisation of party work from Hanover. The SPD's founding meeting took place as early as May 1945, a few days before the unconditional surrender of Germany. Other political parties soon began to rise in West Germany. A new conservative

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[20] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 88.

group of both Catholics and Protestants formed the Christian Democratic Union (CDU): in Bavaria a separate identity as the Christian Social Union (CSU) was founded. The CDU/CSU joint in common lists during German national elections and merged into a parliamentary faction. Several liberal parties emerged in the Western zones of Germany which eventually merged to become the Free Democratic Party (FDP). In the East, immense pressure had been put on a reluctant SPD to merge with the Communist Party (KPD) in the winter of 1945-46. Despite resistance, a forced merger between the KPD and the SPD into the Socialist Unity Party (SED) was finally ratified during a meeting in April 1946.

Although some other minor parties existed in West Germany, this study will focus on the three main parties, the CDU/CSU, SPD and FDP. This is because the governmental coalition-building processes were decided amongst those three. West Germany was essentially a 'tripartite' parliamentary democracy, based on the system of proportional representation.

In Italy, the political landscape was somewhat more complex and heterogeneous. The 'Democrazia Cristiana' (DC) was the newest party, but distinguished itself from the outset as the strongest in post-war Italy. Enjoying the advantage of being heir to the tradition of Don Sturzo's Popular Party, the large peasant based Catholic party founded in 1919, it could use the already established and vast machine of Catholic societies and organisation that were allowed to exist and operate under Fascism.[21] Moreover, it enjoyed massive support of the Church as well as the benevolence of the United States in order to contain Italian communism.

In July 1937, the PCI and the Italian Socialists had signed a pact of cooperation, which was to last until 1956. In the 1946 election of the Constituent Assembly, the Socialists for the first and only time in the post-war Italian political system outnumbered the PCI, reaching 20.7

[21] Sassoon, *Contemporary Italy*, Second Edition (London and New York: Longman, 1997), p. 6.

percent of the votes (PCI: 19 percent). The Socialists were divided in a small faction that favoured the party's independence from the PCI and a larger group that wished to keep the close alliance with the PCI. At the 1946 Congress of the PSIUP, only 10 percent voted for Giuseppe Saragat's 'social democratic' faction, while the majority stressed a commitment to unity of action with the PCI. In 1947, the group around Saragat decided to form what eventually came to be known as the 'Partito Social Democratico Italiano' (PSDI), while the remaining majority changed its name from PSIUP to 'Partito Socialista Italiano' (PSI).[22]

In the 1948 national elections, Communists and Socialists (PSI) cooperated on a joint list and reached 31 percent of the votes.[23] In his speech to the Naples communist organisation in April 1944, PCI post-war leader Togliatti had already advocated a party policy that allowed for an ever greater cooperation with the PSI, conceivably even a fusion.[24] The closest possible alliance with the Socialist Party was crucial, in as much as the PCI feared that it would otherwise run the risk of losing contact with certain important strata of the working people.[25] The PSI was vital in the PCI's entire post-war strategy of alliance seeking.

One of the key questions to address is how the SPD and the PCI dealt with the strong presence of Christian democratic and Catholic parties in Germany and Italy as well as the importance of the Church, albeit considerably more so in Italy, in securing their support. This implied that both parties were forced to operate within the context of strong Christian democratic hegemony and needed to deal with Christian democratic supremacy if they wished to come to governmental power.

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[22] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 135.
[23] Sassoon, *Contemporary Italy*, p. 177.
[24] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 20.
[25] 'V Congresso Nazionale, Sotto la bandiera della democrazia', Resolution to the 5th Congress of the PCI, 29 December 1945-6 January 1946, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano, II 1944-1955* (Venezia: Marsilio Editore, 1985) p. 224.

From the end of 1945 to 1950, there were five coalition governments in Italy, all led by De Gasperi, leader of the DC. The first three included all parties of the Left as well as the minor parties of the centre. De Gasperi's fourth government from May 1947 signalled a turning point in Italian post-war politics. As the Cold War broke out, the Left (PSI and PCI) was expelled from the coalition and Italy was henceforth governed by the DC together with the centrist parties until the beginning of the 1960s.

In West Germany, the coalition building processes were determined by the CDU/CSU, mainly in cooperation with the smaller FDP between 1949 and 1966. Until then, the parliamentary opposition was essentially represented by the SPD. Interestingly, and particularly in comparison with the PCI, the SPD's post-war strategy until the beginning of the 1960s was not determined by the search for coalition partners. The post-war SPD was above all an intransigent, dogmatic opposition party which believed to 'win' or emerge strongest from the national elections. Consequently, its election programmes were not centred on bipartisanship or finding common terrain with the other parties.

The PCI, despite facing a number of challenges from the Left and strong Catholic hegemony, the PCI became and remained the strongest party of the Italian Left (both in terms of adherents and voters) until the party's dissolution at the beginning of the 1990s.

Nonetheless, the PCI faced a dual challenge which developed into an ever increasing conflict of interest: as a communist party with a strong organic link with the Soviet Union, the PCI already distinguished itself from the other parties, more so after 1956, when the PSI officially distanced itself from the PCI after the party's failure to condemn the Soviet invasion of Hungary. Simultaneously, the PCI's post-war strategy evolved around the attempt of becoming eligible for government and seeking possible alliances and coalition partners. Being confronted with a variety of other left-wing parties, the PCI (as well as the other parties of the Left) always faced the task of distinguishing itself from the other parties of the Italian Left

and keeping a distinct profile, whilst at the same time seeking cooperation in local, regional and (so it was hoped) national governments.

2.1) PCI relations with other political forces in Italy

During the resistance and first post-war government, the Italian Communists attributed particular importance and paid great attention to relations with other political forces, most importantly of all, the Christian Democratic Party. This policy was never entirely abandoned, even though with the onset of the Cold War it could no longer be pursued so rigorously. In coming to terms with this strong Catholic presence, which also naturally involved a considerable religious cohesion in Italy, the PCI's entire post-war strategy was developed around finding answers in order to come to terms with Christian democratic dominance. As early as 1944, Togliatti had assured that the PCI 'must not and does not intend to collide with the Catholic masses, which have equally suffered from fascism, and with whom the PCI should rather find a common terrain for creating a democratic Italy'.[26] As we will see later, the Cold War rendered this long-term strategy somewhat difficult, yet, it was never entirely abandoned. This consensus-seeking strategy should not be mistaken as a mere short-term tactic (even if perhaps it was justified as such to the militants amongst the party's rank and file), but proved to be one of the key underlying and distinctive features of the PCI's entire post-war strategy. Unity of action with the PSI as well as a political understanding with the DC were the two twin pillars of Togliatti's perception of relations with other parties as part of the construction of the *partito nuovo* (new party) and inherent in the idea of establishing a 'progressive democracy'.[27]

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[26] Palmiro Togliatti, 'La politica di unità nazionale dei comunisti', Speech to the communist organisation of Naples, 11 April 1944, in Togliatti, *Opere Scelte* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1974), p. 306.
[27] Paolo Spriano, *Storia del Partito Comunista Italiano (V). La Resistenza, Togliatti e il partito nuovo* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1975), p. 391.

Upon return to Italy, Togliatti announced the PCI's willingness to participate in the government headed by Marshal Pietro Badoglio in joint cooperation with the other anti-Fascist forces in Italy (King Victor Emmanuel III had called on Marshal Badoglio to form a government after Mussolini had been overthrown on 25 July 1943). This line, by which the PCI had agreed to enter a coalition government of 'national unity' under the King, and Marshal Badoglio became to be known as 'la svolta di Salerno' (the turning-point of Salerno). The underlying strategy was apparent: the PCI aimed to enter and remain in government as well as urge close cooperation with the other national democratic players. All other questions were subordinate to this aim in these specific national circumstances. With the 'turning-point of Salerno', the PCI attempted to access, and ideally remain in the area of governmental legality and political power.[28]

The only essential precondition that Togliatti had laid down (in order for the PCI to cooperate) was that a Constituent Assembly based on universal suffrage be elected once the war was over to decide the future institutional structure of the country. This marked an undisputed compromise all parties could agree upon.[29] This was, by the PCI's rationale behind it, a minimum condition which everyone could accept, and it would further secure the cooperation of all anti-Fascist and democratic forces in the country. More importantly, it would guarantee the possibility of future influence of the party and the working class.

The PCI's post-war strategy was to all intents and purposes unique amongst Western European communist parties, let alone those parties emerging in Eastern Europe. Togliatti had always firmly rejected the 'Russian October 1917 model' as a universal path for revolution. In a famous speech to the cadres of the communist organisation of Naples, Togliatti had already affirmed on 11 April 1944 that 'today the problem facing the Italian workers is not that of

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[28] See also Giorgio Bocca, *Palmiro Togliatti* (Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1973), p. 365.

[29] 'I Consiglio Nazionale. La politica di unità nazionale dei comunisti', held 30 March - 1 April 1944 in Naples, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano. II 1944-1955*, p. 42.

doing what was done in Russia. The Italian working class has today to solve the terrible and grave problems of the present moment through its own action and struggle'.[30]

Independent from the Soviet model and experience, in every country the roads to socialism were to assume particular forms in accordance with the diversity of the development of capitalism, with its national characteristics and traditions as well as the particular position the country has taken during the Second Word War. The PCI's aim after the war was not the destruction of the capitalist system as such, but to create the economic and social structures that would permanently prevent Fascism from rising and newly planting its roots. The lessons from the past were learned, and the most immediate and urgent objective was to create the economic and political conditions to permanently prevent its re-emergence.[31]

Since an objectively revolutionary situation did not exist (not least due to Allied presence in the country), the party's immediate objective was not socialism but a 'progressive democracy'[32], a notion itself vague and open to various interpretations. What the PCI intended was to build a democratic and economic state, which, as a result of various structural reforms, would permanently eradicate all roots of Fascism and prevent the possibility of its rebirth. In precise terms, this involved an extensive agrarian reform and the destruction of 'monopoly' capitalism.

The PCI's concept of a 'progressive democracy' as an innovative and enlightened programme for a post-war political order should, however, not be overestimated. Its actual content was so vague as to barely consider it a coherent political programme at all. It was a terminology used in almost all of the PCI's declarations between 1944 and 1947. With the party's expulsion from government, it quickly disappeared from the political agenda.

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[30] Togliatti, 'The Communist Policy of National Unity', in Togliatti, *On Gramsci and Other Writings* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1979), p. 40.
[31] *Rinascita*, 'L'Unità nazionale', August / September 1944.
[32] Napolitano, Giorgio, *The Italian Road to Socialism*, an interview with Eric Hobsbawm (Westport, Conn.: Lawrence Hill; London: Journeyman Press, 1977), p. 7.

In the immediate post-war period until the beginning of the Cold War, the PCI's strategy was shaped by the dictate of Realpolitik. Rigid party dogmatism was not only considered to be misplaced, but would have failed to secure the PCI the widest possible support in permanently implanting itself throughout Italian society. This proved to be the right strategy at the time, when the Italian population was most concerned with the reconstruction of the country and to grasp and deal with the lessons from the past.

2.2) The creation of mass parties

Part and parcel of the PCI's post-war strategy was the attempt to create a mass political party. Togliatti had opened the door to as many activists as possible and aimed at the establishment of a true mass party. In July 1943 the PCI had only incorporated around 5,000 to 6,000 activists. By January 1946, the party's membership had risen to approximately 1,800,000 members[33], a number the SPD had never reached in its entire post-war history. Religious faith was not seen as an obstacle to PCI membership, which in turn not only secured greater party membership in a Catholic country, but in itself may be interpreted as an invitation to cooperation with the DC.[34] The broadest possible admission criterion to the party was seen crucial to destroy Fascism, annihilate the reactionary bourgeois forces but also to implant itself permanently in society and attract members and voters well beyond the traditional working class spectrum, and link the latter with wide sections of society, peasants, professionals, intellectuals etc.[35] The PCI thus practised an exceptionally broad admissions

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[33] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 4.
[34] 'V Congresso Nazionale, Sotto la bandiera della democrazia', Resolution to the 5th Congress of the PCI, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana (...) II 1944-1955*, p. 225.
[35] Togliatti, 'I compiti del partito nella situazione attuale', in Togliatti, *Opere Scelte*, p. 349.

policy, whereby ideological credentials and religious faith were secondary and not an impediment for member recruitment.[36]

Particular attention was attributed to the peasant masses, which would not yet turn to proletarian parties but the DC instead. Togliatti at various occasions reiterated that one of the reasons why fascism came to power was that 'we [the Italian Communists] did not arrive at an agreement between the proletarian organisations led by the Communist and Socialist Parties, and the peasant associations which had the then Popular Party as their reference point'.[37] As early as April 1944, Togliatti outlined the immediate tasks of the PCI in the present situation, according to which the PCI was no longer to be merely a small cadre section or propagandist organisation that advocated the ideals of communism and a socialist society.[38] Rather, in the course of 1944, the PCI consolidated its image and character of a true mass-(class based) party that derived much of its national character from its role in the Italian resistance, combating the German invader and liberating Italy from all Fascist roots.[39]

In the immediate post-1945 period the PCI's evolution was characterised by an unparalleled growth in size and prestige. As mentioned before, this in part may be attributed to the fact that the PCI's moral and political prestige had grown enormously by the party's resistance effort and that it fought at the forefront against Fascism. In addition, the PCI, at least initially, benefited enormously from its link with the Soviet Union. Between 1944 and 1946, the image of the USSR was substantially positive, which then reversed considerably in the forthcoming years.[40]

Reaffirming the party's respect for religious convictions of the people and presenting the PCI's new image as a defender of religious liberty and respect. Togliatti fully endorsed the

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[36] 'V Congresso Nazionale, Sotto la bandiera della democrazia', Resolution to the 5th Congress of the PCI, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana (...) II 1944-1955*, p. 225.
[37] Togliatti, 'I compiti del partito nella situazione attuale', p. 360.
[38] Ibid., p. 345.
[39] Ibid., p. 340.
[40] Sassoon, 'Italian Images of Russia, 1945-56', in Christopher Duggan, Christopher Wagstaff (eds), *Italy in the Cold War Politics, Culture and Society 1948-58* (Oxford, Washington: Berg, 1995), p. 189.

Constitutional guarantees of freedom of conscience and of religious propaganda and contributed the decisive votes of the party in favour of the inclusion of Article 7 in the Italian Constitution (the 1929 Lateran Pacts maintained the Church's special status in the state).[41] This was a unique strategy in as much as it manifested a reversal of the conventional relationship towards the State and Church that was common to communist parties.

In terms of SPD membership, the figures achieved by the party were impressive considering Germany's most recent history. The majority of the population was demoralised and more immediately involved with the concerns of imminent survival than engagement in politics and party activism. Nonetheless, in December 1946 the SPD incorporated around 720,000 members, by March 1947 they had increased to 782,000 members.[42] Although these figures were remarkable, they were not comparable with the development of the PCI since its rebirth.[43]

Ever since the SPD's re-emergence after 1945, Schumacher addressed the issue of winning over the middle strata in most of his speeches, reiterating that the SPD should be 'open' to all people who were willing to cooperate and work actively in reconstructing the party. These included the expansion of the class sector, the winning over of intellectuals, the middle classes, peasants, as well as former NSDAP members who did not compromise themselves during the Third Reich.[44] For electoral reasons, the SPD acknowledged that it necessarily had to appeal to other and wider sections of society, particularly because it had lost some of the

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[41] Blackmer, 'Continuity and Change in Postwar Italian Communism', in D. Blackmer, S. Tarrow (eds), *Communism in Italy and France* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 30.
[42] See Appendix 1.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Peter Lösche, 'Abschied von der Klassenpartei – das Ringen der SPD um die Mittelschichten', in Dieter Dowe (ed.), *Kurt Schumacher und der „Neubau" der deutschen Sozialdemokratie nach 1945*, Gesprächskreise Geschichte, Heft 13 (Bonn: FES, 1996), p. 100. See also Kurt Klotzbach, *Der Weg zur Staatspartei, Programmatik, praktische Politik und Organisation der deutschen Sozialdemokratie 1945 bis 1965* (Berlin, Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1996), p. 46.

strongest areas of social democratic support that after the war lay in Poland or in the Soviet zone of occupation.

Moreover, the SPD realised that it would only become a people's party, both in membership and electoral terms, if it refrained from the usage of dogmatism and rigid Marxism. Despite this acknowledgment, the SPD pursued an isolationist policy in many respects and the party was, besides its intentions and rhetoric, a far cry from becoming a people's party.

2.3) The economic strategy of the PCI and the SPD

From an orthodox Marxist perspective, the PCI's post-war economic programme had been remarkably revisionist in character. For a communist party, the PCI's quest for the nationalisation of the means of production was comparatively moderate in tone. Contrary to the SPD, Togliatti was rather reluctant to tie his hands with detailed programmatic statements that might alienate future tactical allies. As demonstrated before, the PCI was above all determined to become a national party and did not perceive itself as being representative of solely the narrow corporate interests of the working class.[45]

Hence, the PCI refrained from using its prestige amongst the working class to trigger a militant mass movement to fight for political and economic reform.[46] Nonetheless, the PCI's and the SPD's economic programmes converged on the aspect of the nationalisation of certain economic sectors. In the PCI's resolution as approved of at the 5th National Congress in 1946, the demand for the 'nationalisation of all large monopolistic firms, of the big banks and of the insurance companies' was expressed.[47] In the agrarian sector, the PCI proposed the

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[45] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 103.
[46] Ibid., p. 146.
[47] 'V Congresso Nazionale, Sotto la bandiera della democrazia', Resolution to the 5th Congress of the PCI, 29 December 1945-6 January 1946, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano, II 1944-1955*, p. 224.

'elimination of the large estates of absentee landlords and the limitation of capitalist farms'.[48] The PCI's early statements on economic policy are best interpreted in the more general context of 'structural reforms'. These were to be implemented in the agrarian sector to diminish the monopoly of powerful landlords and in the industrial sector, through the nationalisation of certain industries and a limited degree of economic planning and the protection of small and medium sized property.[49]

In Germany, left-wing initiatives to reform the economy met considerable opposition of the American occupying forces. In October 1945, Kurt Schumacher, a dedicated Marxist in principle, demanded the nationalisation of the mines, the heavy goods industry, power, transport, the insurance and banking sector.[50] At the 1947 Party Congress, Schumacher somewhat qualified these demands, arguing that the SPD favoured 'a central planning in the economy', distinguishing itself from orthodox communist demands for 'a centralised planned economy' in the Eastern sector.[51] This distinction was necessary given the proximity with the emerging planned economy in the East. The SPD also stressed its desire for competition amongst socialised companies, preferably within the framework of a market economy.[52] By 1949, the SPD had confined itself to demanding the disempowerment of large ownership and managers through the socialisation of the basic and key industries.[53] This concept was, however, somewhat vague and misleading as it was not always clear which industries the SPD identified as 'key' and 'basic' so as to qualify for socialisation. Included in the SPD's

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[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Kurt Schumacher, 'Was wollen die Sozialdemokraten? Neubau nicht Wiederaufbau!', Speech held on 27 October 1945, in Susanne Miller (ed.), *Die SPD vor und nach Godesberg* (Bonn-Bad Godesberg: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1974), p. 76.
[51] Kurt Schumacher, 'Deutschland und Europa', in SPD (ed.), *Protokoll des SPD-Parteitages*, held from 29 June to 2 July 1947 in Nuremberg, (Hamburg: Verlag Auerdruck, 1947), p. 49.
[52] Ibid.
[53] 'Entschließungen von Bad Dürkheim', Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst, 30.8.1949, in Willy Albrecht (ed.), *Die SPD unter Kurt Schumacher und Erich Ollenhauer 1946 bis 1963, Sitzungsprotokolle der Spitzengremien*, Band 2, 1948-1950 (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2003), p. 268.

socialisation programme (or those industries which qualified for a 'profound reconstruction') were large monopolies, big banks and insurance companies.[54]

The conviction that capitalism had failed was not only expressed in left-wing party programmes but was more widely shared in West Germany. Public ownership (of the coal and steel industries) was in fact advocated by the CDU in its 1947 Ahlen Programme.[55] Jakob Kaiser[56], for example, had even demanded a complete reconstruction of society on the basis of a 'Christian-shaped socialism', which found great support by the Catholic left.[57]

2.4) The SPD, PCI and the middle classes

Both PCI and SPD shared a reciprocal understanding of the importance of the middle classes. As noted before, the PCI was no longer a small propagandist sect with only a few thousand members.[58] It now required a thorough analysis of the party's relation with the middle classes, as it was this section which was seen to have secured the support of Fascism in Italy. The PCI's definition of 'allies' in the immediate post-war period was extremely broad and inclusive: it integrated everyone except 'monopolists', i.e. large capitalists, who qualified as the most direct adversaries of the working class.[59] The winning over of the middle classes was part and parcel of the PCI's post-war strategy. In his famous speech in 1946, Togliatti had reaffirmed that there was 'no conflict between the interests of the PCI and those of the middle classes'.[60]

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[54] See SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1950/1951* (Dortmund: Westfalendruck, 1951), p. 26.
[55] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 159. See also Peter Merseburger, *Der schwierige Deutsche: Kurt Schumacher* (Stuttgart: Dt. Verlagsanstalt, 1995), p. 200.
[56] Jakob Kaiser was one of the leading figures of the CDU in the Eastern sector. In December 1947 he migrated to West Berlin.
[57] Merseburger, *Der schwierige Deutsche*, p. 200 ff.
[58] Togliatti, 'Le caratteristiche del nostro Partito', Speech to the 6th Congress of the PCI, 4 January 1948, re-printed in Archivio Partito Comunista (subsequently APC), Microfilm (subsequently MF) 0515 0663.
[59] See also Stephen Hellman, 'The PCI's alliance strategy and the case of the middle classes', in D. Blackmer, S. Tarrow (eds), *Communism in Italy and France*, pp. 374-375.
[60] Togliatti, 'Ceto medio e Emilia rossa', Speech held on 24 September 1946, in Togliatti, *Opere Scelte*, p. 460.

Much as the PCI's, the SPD's rhetoric under Kurt Schumacher was also directed towards the creation of a democratic mass party. In spite of this declared aim, there existed a vast discrepancy between party rhetoric and de facto policies. The SPD's policies fell short of this aim. At the SPD's Party Congress in Hanover in May 1946, Schumacher had advocated an open admissions policy, declaring that the party welcomed everyone who joined the SPD from a different class or section of society (and not to draw too close a line along class divisions), and all those who stood in contradiction to the ownership of large means of production.[61] Despite this vocal commitment to win over large sections of the middle classes, the SPD, contrary to the PCI, failed to formulate a programme that appealed to and managed to incorporate precisely these sections of the population.

Somewhat deliberately overstating, one could argue that the post-1945 SPD, at least until the death of its first leader in 1952, was more 'left-wing' and pursued policies that were more rigorously dogmatic and less compromising that those of the PCI. In spite of its intentions, the SPD's intransigent national as well as European policies alienated those sections it wished to attract. In pure electoral terms, this led to, for the SPD, an unexpected defeat in West Germany's first national election in 1949. This election marked the most profound defeat in the SPD's post-war history, precisely because the SPD had been convinced they were to become the major and electorally strongest party by appealing to the widest possible sections of the population. Although the SPD had only been narrowly defeated – the margin between the SPD and the leading Conservative Party (as well as its Bavarian sister party) was relatively small (SPD: 29.2 percent; CDU/CSU: 31 percent) compared to the next elections in 1953, it marked an important defeat for the SPD. The SPD failed - as it had hoped - to become the governing party of the new West German Federal Republic. The loss of the party's strong areas of support, which by then lay in Poland or in the Soviet zone (Sachsen, Thüringen and East Berlin) also contributed to the electoral defeat. But more importantly and with hindsight

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[61] Speech held at the Party Congress in Hanover, May 1946, in K. Schumacher, *Aufgaben und Ziele der deutschen Sozialdemokratie* (Karlsruhe: Schriftenreihe Volk und Zeit, Verlag Volk und Zeit, 1946), p. 5.

(as the subsequent elections of 1953 and 1957 demonstrated) was that the SPD had not only failed to mobilise large sections of the population away from the traditional working class sector, but also alienated many potential voters with its unyielding economic and foreign policy positions.[62]

2.5) The Foreign and European policies of the PCI and the SPD

In Western Europe, the main foreign and European policies to be addressed in the post-war period until the mid-1950s were membership in the Western military alliance, NATO, adherence to the United States and endorsement of closer European economic cooperation and integration. These foreign policy choices were determined by the parties of government and had been endorsed by all German and Italian political parties, except the SPD and PCI (as well as until the mid-1950s, the PSI). The SPD and the PCI, albeit for very different reasons, objected both NATO as well as proposals for European economic integration; the reasons for which will be subject of thorough analysis in subsequent chapters.

Before going any further, some attention should be paid to the Berlin question, as the uncertain status of this city largely influenced the SPD's foreign policy considerations over the next two post-war decades. Later, in the 1960s, the Berlin question was a key determining factor in the formulation and concretisation of the SPD's Ostpolitik. The particular vulnerability of the city was forcefully demonstrated when the Soviet Union blocked all transport to and from West Berlin as a response to the currency reform introduced in the Western zones in 1948.[63] For almost a year, the Soviet Union had cut West Berlin off from communication and transport with the Western zones. From 24 June 1948 to 12 May 1949,

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[62] Johan J. De Deken, 'The German Social Democratic Party', in Robert Ladrech, Philippe Marlière (eds), *Social Democratic Parties in the European Union* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1999), p. 81.
[63] See also Mary Fulbrook, *The Divided Nation* (London: Fontana Press, Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), pp. 157-158.

the road, rail and water routes to West Berlin were blockaded, and the Western powers had to secure the supply to the population by air routes. The crisis over Berlin only hardened the determination of those in the SPD (as much as it confirmed the correctness of Adenauer's and the CDU/CSU policy choices), who wished to link the Western part of Germany closer to Western Europe.[64] But in spite of the existence of diverging voices, the chosen course was predetermined by Schumacher's authoritarian leadership.

Even with the increasing international polarisation between the East and West, Italy played, in comparison to Germany, an entirely peripheral role.[65] Until the outbreak of Cold War hostilities, Italy had been of no strategic importance to either the United States or the Soviet Union.[66] As demonstrated before, the post-war PCI can above all be characterised by its moderate, consensus-seeking policies. For example, with respect to economic policies, the PCI did not prove to be terribly communist after all, or in fact not more so than the SPD, a distinctive feature that was to remain prevalent even after the onset of the Cold War.

Nonetheless, one should not overstate the autonomy and independence of the PCI's strategy since 1944. The PCI's 'svolta di Salerno' and subsequent collaboration with the other political forces in government had been endorsed and was entirely in line with Soviet foreign policy interests.[67] Though Togliatti's national policy proved to be the right strategy at the time, it is difficult to imagine that it could have been elaborated and implemented if it collided with Soviet foreign policy interests and directives. After all, one needs to bear in mind that the Badoglio government had been accepted by the Soviet Union (as well as the Allies) prior to the PCI's recognition of the monarchist government. 'La svolta di Salerno' was in complete

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[64] See Jussi Hanhimäki and Odd Arne Westad (eds), *The Cold War. A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 71.
[65] See also Sassoon, 'Italian Images of Russia', p. 189.
[66] This changed with the outbreak of the Cold War and the Tito-Stalin split.
[67] Silvio Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia. L'URSS, il PCI e le origini della Guerra fredda (1943-1948)* (Roma: Carocci Editore, 1999), pp. 11-12.

concordance with the Soviet Union.[68] The PCI's cooperative attitude and role in the Constituent Assembly involved no conflict between the party's domestic ambitions and its loyalty to the Soviet Union.[69]

With the increasing Cold War hostilities, Italy's temporary post-war harmony came to an end. This implied that the PCI's post-war strategy also came to an abrupt end and was forced to be radically reversed. With the beginning of the Cold War, the PCI was attacked from both sides. Supported by the United States as well as the Church, the DC split the tripartite coalition government in 1947 and adopted an intransigent anti-communist policy. This had been one of the conditions imposed to receive Marshall Aid; consequently, the PCI was, together with its socialist ally, expelled from government. Moreover, the PCI (together with the PCF) suffered severe criticism from the newly established Cominform (a Soviet-installed information bureau) for not being in government and for its soft and moderate policies.

The Italian Communists, together with their French counterparts, were called upon to mobilise mass demonstrations against the Marshall Plan and NATO and the PCI's national interests became increasingly subordinated to the strategic needs of Soviet foreign and power policy interests.[70] For ideological reasons and due to the organic link with Moscow inherent in communist identity, the creation of NATO naturally raised particularly strong objections from all West European communist parties. The PCI could not but align with these communist polemics and Soviet directives. In a speech on 12 March 1949, Togliatti dismissed NATO as a mere 'pact of aggression', directed towards the division of the European continent. As such the PCI 'said "no" to the Atlantic Pact, "no" to a policy of hostility and aggression against the Soviet Union'.[71]

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[68] Michael Strübel, *Neue Wege der italienischen Kommunisten. Zur Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik der KPI (1973-1981)* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1982), p. 80.

[69] Donald L.M. Blackmer, 'The International Strategy of the Italian Communist Party', in Donald L.M. Blackmer and Annie Kriegel (eds), *The International Role of the Communist Parties of Italy and France*, No. 32 (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1975), p. 5.

[70] See also Blackmer, 'The International Strategy', p. 8.

[71] Togliatti's speech against NATO, 12 March 1949, re-printed in Hanhimäki, Westad (eds), *The Cold War*, pp. 133-134.

At this stage, an inherent contradiction in the PCI's foreign policy concept became noticeable: on the one hand the PCI demanded Italy's national sovereignty in all foreign policy choices and against outside interference, opposed the emerging power blocs and dismissed all attempts to limit Italy's autonomy and independence; on the other hand, the PCI firmly aligned with the Soviet Union on all foreign policy questions. [72] As a communist party, the PCI could of course not remain neutral in the emerging East-West conflict. The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the establishment of Cominform and their expulsion from government, were all events that the Italian Communists were forced to accept and could not influence. The PCI's fate was decided upon by outside players and the party had to adapt to the new political realities accordingly.

2.6) PCI, SPD and the European Recovery Programme (ERP)

The SPD generally welcomed US financial aid as part of the ERP, much as it was enthusiastically supported by all German parties in the Western sector (with exception of the small Communist Party) as a means to revive the devastated European economies and enhance and also reinforce cooperation amongst Western European countries.[73]

According to Schumacher, Marshall Aid was intended to and would accelerate the economic reconstruction of a democratic society on socialist terms.[74] The SPD's endorsement of the

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[72] 'VI Congresso Nazionale, Per una nuova democrazia per la libertà, l'indipendenza, la pace', 6th National Congress of the PCI, held 5-10 January 1948 in Milan, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer, La via italiana (...) II 1944-1955*, p. 406.

[73] Kurt Schumacher, 'Deutschland und Europa', in SPD-Bundestagsfraktion (ed.), *Parlamentarische Positionen zu Europa. Von den Sozialdemokraten im Reichstag 1866 bis zur SPD-Bundestagsfraktion heute* (Bonn: Courir-Druck, 2007), p. 24. See also Rudolf Hrbek, *Die SPD – Deutschland und Europa* (Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1972), p. 60.

[74] Solveig Ehrler, 'Zur Deutschlandpolitik der SPD', in Solveig Ehrler (ed.), *Sozialdemokratie und Sozialismus heute. Beiträge zur Analyse und Veränderung sozialdemokratischer Politik* (Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein Verlag, 1968), p. 83.

programme remained contingent on the expectation that it would not obstruct Western Europe's road to socialism and planned economy, and even make it easier.[75]

Apart from general endorsement, the SPD did not devote much attention to it. More important in the eyes of many German Social Democrats under Schumacher, were the issue of European economic integration and the question of national reunification. Matters were different for the PCI. Opposition to Marshall Aid, as instructed by Moscow, was not confined solely to the PCI. It was also opposed by the PSI. For political and ideological reasons, both Italian Communists and Socialists heavily objected US financial aid and Italy being a recipient of it.[76] In conformity with the Soviet Union, Togliatti dismissed Marshall Aid on the grounds that the recovery programme intended to create a bloc of countries hostile to the Soviet Union. The Marshall Plan would only further the division of Europe into two permanently opposing blocs – a division which the Americans called the Iron Curtain.[77] PCI criticism against Marshall Aid was strong in rhetoric but limited towards these more general political and ideological statements. Opposition to it must be understood in the context of the emerging Cold War. Hostility was not ideologically motivated, at least not in the sense that the PCI opposed American economic aid *per se*, but – concordant with Soviet interests – the PCI despised the political connotation to it.

2.7) SPD, PCI, Europe and the emerging Cold War

The SPD was not hostile towards the idea of European economic integration as such. The objections raised were not ideologically motivated, but partially dominated by domestic policy considerations. The SPD's 'Heidelberger Programme' of 1925 (the party's last official

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[75] For an analysis of the SPD's position towards the Marshall Plan, see Klaus Schwabe, 'German Policy Responses to the Marshall Plan', in Charles S. Maier, *The Marshall Plan and Germany* (New York, Oxford: Berg, 1991), p. 225-281.

[76] Mauro Maggiorani, *L'Europa degli altri. Comunisti italiani e integrazione europea (1957-1969)* (Roma: Carocci Editore, 1998), p. 16.

[77] *Rinascita*, 'Il Piano Marshall', No. 6, June 1947.

programme) had, for the first time, envisaged a 'creation of a United States of Europe'.[78] As we will notice, this was in particular contrast to the SPD's statements on Europe after 1945. The SPD's early European conception and position on economic integration with the West was ambivalent and controversial. On the one hand, Kurt Schumacher still officially voiced the very idea of a Germany fully imbedded in a socialist Europe; on the other, this was subject to severe reservations. The question of Europe naturally involved the issue of ceding national sovereignty in favour of supranational organisational structures. This idea was positively endorsed by the SPD, yet, it was inextricably linked to the idea of reciprocity and equality.[79] A further precondition concerned the structures of Europe: these were to be based on the principles of socialism and democracy.[80] The aim of national reunification (at the earliest possible point) was (officially) of paramount concern, and all other questions were to be subordinated. The SPD insisted that cementing West Germany too firmly into Western Europe (and later in the Atlantic Alliance) would institutionalise the division. Reunification with East Germany was therefore officially given priority over integrating West Germany with the rest of Europe.[81] The 'official' character of these statements is deliberately emphasised as they were only secondarily responsible for the SPD's hostility. As will be argued later, the persistence on equality even qualified the insistence on reunification to the extent that the issue of equality, or the insufficiency of it (within this newly created Europe), was, at times, more important than the goal of reintegrating and merging all occupied zones together into a unified Germany. In almost all foreign policy declarations between 1945 and

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[78] 'Programm der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, beschlossen auf dem Parteitag in Heidelberg 1925', re-printed in Dieter Dowe, Kurt Klotzbach (eds), *Programmatische Dokumente der deutschen Sozialdemokratie* (Berlin, Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1984), p. 224. On the pre-war SPD and Europe see also Wilfried Loth, 'Von Heidelberg nach Godesberg: Europa-Konzepte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie zwischen Utopie und Politik', in Gabriele Clemens (ed.), *Nation und Europa, Studien zum internationalen Staatensystem im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001), p. 203.

[79] See also Hrbek, *Die SPD – Deutschland und Europa*, p. 33.

[80] SPD Party Congress Hanover, 1946, in SPD-Bundestagsfraktion (ed.), *Parlamentarische Positionen zu Europa. Von den Sozialdemokraten im Reichstag 1866 bis zur SPD-Bundestagsfraktion heute*, p. 24.

[81] Christoph Kleßmann, 'Wiedervereinigung und deutsche Nation – der Kern der Politik Kurt Schumachers', in Dieter Dowe (ed.), *Kurt Schumacher und der „Neubau" der deutschen Sozialdemokratie nach 1945*, p. 122.

1949, Schumacher reaffirmed that the SPD aimed at a 'United States of Europe'[82] and that the era of unlimited national sovereignty had ceased. Nonetheless, he would only accept West Germany's integration on the basis of full parity with the other European countries.[83] Schumacher had been and could afford to be more 'nationalist' in tone due to his resistance to the Nazi dictatorship. In pure electoral terms, the feasibility of this strategy was questionable as his demands largely failed to appeal to and attract larger sections in society.[84]

During many occasions, the SPD stressed an analogy between the Oder-Neisse line in the East and the separation of the Saar from the rest of Germany in the West, arguing that if the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) gave up its position over the Saar, which a separate entry into the Council of Europe would have practically implied, the FRG would relinquish its bargaining powers over the disputed territories in the East.[85] Schumacher's maximalist demands were, however, not accepted without opposition in the SPD. The SPD in West Berlin never entirely shared Schumacher's rigid requirements and had, as early as 1947, advocated stronger economic integration of the Western zones with Europe.[86]

In Cold War terms, one could argue that the PCI had little choice other than to oppose all steps towards European economic integration. As stressed above, the PCI's evolution as the main party of the Italian Left and party of government was strongly hindered and decelerated by international circumstances. The PCI's foreign policy was determined by its link to the

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[82] SPD Party Congress Hanover, 1946, in SPD-Bundestagsfraktion (ed.), *Parlamentarische Positionen zu Europa*, p. 24.
[83] Schumacher, 'Was wollen die Sozialdemokraten? Neubau nicht Wiederaufbau!', p. 85.
[84] See also Klotzbach who stressed that Schumacher's style was inappropriate to attract larger groups such as the Catholic working class, which was so crucial in order to increase the party's electoral appeal. Klotzbach, *Der Weg zur Staatspartei*, p. 176.
[85] See, for example, Kurt Schumacher, 'Erwiderung auf Adenauers erste außenpolitische Erklärung', Speech in parliament, 15 November 1949, in K. Schumacher, *Reden-Schriften-Korrespondenzen 1945-1952*, Willy Albrecht (ed.), (Berlin, Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1985), p. 729.
[86] Ernst Reuter, for example, mayor of West Berlin in the 1950s, already advocated in 1947 a closer integration of West Germany with the economies of Western Europe. See Loth, 'Von Heidelberg nach Godesberg', p. 215.

Soviet Union and a demand for the primacy of neutrality in Italian foreign affairs. European integration in its early stages was dismissed in the more general context of the Cold War and American capitalist dominance in Western Europe. As such, the proposals to merge some sectors of the Western European economies, American financial aid, the Atlantic Pact – all of these were dismissed as alliances against the Soviet Union and attempts to permanently divide the European continent into two. Besides these more generally disapproving statements on Europe, not much attention was paid by the PCI to Europe in the late 1940s. Europe did not rank high in the PCI's strategic priorities. This of course is of little surprise as foreign policy choices were made 'abroad' and accepted by the governing parties of Italy (the same applied to Germany, where national sovereignty had been even more severely constrained). As such, the PCI could do little but remain aloof. The PCI's reaction to and position on European integration, and later the EEC, was hostile throughout the 1950s. As we will investigate later, this did not substantially alter in the 1950s and a gradual revision occurred at the beginning of the 1960s.[87]

2.8) Prospects for the 1950s

In the immediate post-war period, ideology was already seen to be somewhat of an obstacle to the PCI's and SPD's advance in both electoral terms as well as in accumulating the widest possible membership. Adherence to ideology was regarded to alienate possible future social and political alliance as well as coalition partners. This was, at least in theory, understood by both SPD and PCI alike. In practice, both parties' policy choices were influenced and shaped by external constraints. The PCI, heavily constrained by international circumstances, nonetheless continued its chosen path of domestic moderation. With the beginning of the 1950s, the SPD increasingly succumbed to rigid dogmatism. Driven by the belief to 'win'

[87] Sassoon, 'The Italian Communist Party's European Strategy', *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 47 (1976), p. 254.

national elections, little attention was paid to generate foreign and economic policy ground with the other parties. Much may be attributed to the monolithic style of Schumacher's leadership, who, as widely argued, influenced and made every major decision affecting the national and international policy of his party between 1946 and 1952.[88]

As far as the PCI was concerned, the Italian constitution was, for example, not only a manifestation of the unity of the anti-fascist forces but also one of the most apparent demonstrations of the party's moderation and cooperativeness at the time. Its drafting was not influenced by outside constraints, and even the onset of the Cold War did not interrupt the cooperation between the Left and the DC, which led to a unanimous vote in favour of the final draft.[89] The German 'Grundgesetz' (Basic Law), on the other hand, was an expression of the Cold War and the division of Germany. The SPD, most importantly represented by Carlo Schmid, worked actively in drafting a German constitution, even though with important reservations.[90] By referring to the provisional nature of the West German Republic, the SPD insisted on the creation of a 'Basic Law' (as opposed to a constitution). By asserting the temporary character of the Basic Law and by refraining from giving it the formal status of a constitution (which in fact it was), the SPD hoped it would not contradict the aim of national reunification.[91] An official constitution, so leading SPD officials held, could only be written once Germany was reunified.

In many ways, the PCI had followed the appropriate national strategy between 1944 and 1947 and managed to grasp the most urgent, prevailing needs of the Italian population. With the

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[88] Kevin Featherstone, *Socialist Parties and European Integration. A comparative history* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), p. 144.
[89] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 130.
[90] Carlo Schmid was the SPD's leading representative in the drafting committee. See also Robert Hoffmann, *Geschichte der deutschen Parteien* (München, Zürich: Piper, 1993), p. 249.
[91] Article 146 of the Basic Law (old version) declared that, 'the Basic Law with its provisional statute should be replaced by a permanent constitution after the restoration of German unity'.

beginning of the Cold War, its fate was left to outside factors to decide upon. Ironically though, while its strategies drew the logical conclusions from the past, they did not stand a chance in practice. The PCI was forced to change its strategy and to adapt to a new set of international circumstances. As a result of the emerging Cold war hostilities, international and domestic conditions became least favourable for an 'Italian road to socialism'. The PCI, forced to align with the foreign policy interests of the Soviet Union, however, never entirely abandoned its policy of moderation and consensus-seeking with the other political forces in Italy. But subordination to Soviet directives was incompatible with the party's national ambitions. Nevertheless, with respect to domestic policies, the PCI remained a moderate force and perceived itself as foremost a national party seeking a course that was different from the Soviet model of society.

Chapter Two

The SPD and the PCI in the 1950s: the road towards revisionism

1.) 1950s: Parties and Elections in Italy and Germany

The Cold War affected the SPD more than any other Western European social democratic party. Whereas for most parties the enemy was sitting far away in Moscow, the SPD's foreign policy was inextricably linked with Germany's provisional status, her geographical situation and the communist regime in the East. The uncertain status of Berlin presented a special problem for it was a dangerous buffer zone between East and West. In the 1950s, the SPD's German policy (as in fact inherent in the name) was essentially a national policy. This also implied that the party's foreign and national policies of those years cannot be clearly separated. This only reversed in the 1960s with the acknowledgement of the interrelatedness of the German question with European détente.

The Cold War could not leave the PCI unaffected either. The party's advancement to an Italian way of socialism, to be achieved via structural reforms in a coalition government, was hindered by East-West hostilities and the party's firm allegiance to the Soviet Union. The theory of 'national roads to socialism' implied the acceptance of different strategies for, and paths towards, socialist revolution for communist parties in different national contexts. In Europe the national roads strategy became the official policy for Western European communist parties during the Popular Front era (1934-1939), and later in the phase of 'national unity' at the end of World War II. It was discarded with the founding of Cominform in 1947.

PCI participation in a governmental alliance during the Cold War, in a country firmly imbedded in the Atlantic Alliance, seemed unlikely at the time. The PCI's national room to manoeuvre was influenced and largely determined by its allegiance to the Soviet Union in the

Cold War and Italy's belonging to the Atlantic Alliance. Any concretisation of the PCI's national path was fundamentally dependent on a stabilisation of the volatile Cold War atmosphere. The PCI hoped that this would decrease anti-communist feelings at home and render a revisionism of its foreign policy fundamentals and a search for bipartisanship more likely. A green light by the Soviet Union (like the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1956) was desirable, and most certainly contributed decisively to a policy re-thinking in the middle of the 1950s, but changed little about the PCI's national stalemate. The fundamental impetus would have to come from the PCI itself.

In spite of an international climate of hostility, the PCI, unlike the SPD, continued its moderate and largely constructive course in domestic politics. For example, between 1948 and 1953, PCI deputies voted in favour of two-thirds of all legislation in parliament.[92] With respect to economic policies, the PCI had already distinguished itself from the Soviet model. Soviet-style planned economy was neither regarded as vital and indispensable, nor in fact desirable for an Italian road to socialism. The PCI refrained from demanding further nationalisation in the economy, in part, certainly because of the already existing relatively large public sector in the country. In short, while the PCI acknowledged and praised the achievements of the 1917 October Revolution, the Soviet model would not be applied to Italy. This assertion can of course be subject to various interpretations. Most likely, however, the PCI acknowledged and praised the Soviet achievements in establishing a socialist society but refrained from the revolutionary path towards that end in Italy. How exactly the PCI wished to arrive at a socialist system – in a capitalist, parliamentary democracy like Italy – other than by introducing structural reforms, remained unanswered.

[92] Blackmer, 'Continuity and Change', p. 48.

In the early post-1945 period and well into the 1950s, the PCI seemed to make profit from a certain programmatic vagueness. After all, electoral survival depends also on the capacity to win over larger sections of society. A sound electoral appeal had to be given priority over ideological purity. Nevertheless, the PCI's political situation was at an impasse. The Italian Socialists managed to increase their share of votes between 1953 and 1958, whereas the PCI failed to do so, yet remained relatively stable. The Italian national election in 1953 marked an important date for Italian politics. While the left-wing vote emerged considerably increased, the majority gained by the centrist coalition (DC, Liberals, Republicans and Social Democrats) was extremely narrow. The DC, although still enjoying a comfortable 40 percent, had lost considerably compared to the first post-war elections in 1948. As a result of the election outcome, the centre-left formula was first discussed and had, as we will see towards the mid-1950s, far- reaching effects on the PSI, and consequently, although unwillingly, also on the PCI.[93] In the mid-1950s, the Italian Socialists had abandoned its original post-war strategy of a united front with the PCI. The pact of unity with the Italian Communists had, in practice, meant subordination for the Italian Socialists.[94] At the beginning of the 1960s, the PSI began to opt for an understanding with the centre parties, thereby preferring a minority role in the governing coalition over a minority position in a PCI-led opposition.[95] The SPD's electoral results in the 1950s were equally little promising, partly, if not primarily, due to the party's own choice to adopt the role of an intransigent opposition party. In electoral terms, the CDU/CSU consolidated its advantage towards the SPD in the 1950s, while the Social Democrats' share of votes remained relatively stagnant. Whereas the SPD in fact suffered a small loss between 1949 and 1953, the CDU/CSU, by comparison, impressively increased its share of votes throughout the 1950s. In the 1957 national election, the CDU/CSU had even

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[93] See also Ilaria Favretto, *The Long Search for a Third Way. The British Labour Party and the Italian Left since 1945* (Oxford, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 26.
[94] Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy. Society and Politics 1943-1988* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 193.
[95] Sassoon, 'La sinistra in Italia e in Europa. Elezioni e governi 1945-1988', *Italia Contemporanea*, 175 (June 1989), p. 19.

gained an absolute majority for the first and only time in Germany's electoral history. The SPD, by contrast, had managed to increase its vote between the 1953 and 1957 elections only disappointingly.[96]

2.) The SPD, PCI and the proposal for a European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)

The SPD's initial attitude towards Schuman's proposal to merge Europe's coal and steel industries was reserved and cautious, but not as yet entirely negative.[97] A first major declaration on the Schuman Plan was made by Schumacher at the SPD Party Congress in Hamburg (21-25 May 1950). Its contents did not alter much from previous statements on Europe and contained much of the party's position on the Council of Europe. Schumacher's statements were characterised by a disapproving attitude and revolved around the necessity of British participation (to act as a counterweight against conservative forces)[98], the importance of preserving the nationalisation option as well as the abolition of the Ruhr Authority as a precondition for the establishment of a coal and steel pool.[99] Similarly to the debate over Germany's entry into the Council of Europe, the SPD laid great emphasis on German equality as a prerequisite for participation.

In general, the question of the Schuman Plan triggered little substantial debate and controversy amongst SPD delegates. A party resolution was thus passed on the Schuman Plan stating that,

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[96] See Appendix 4.

[97] William E. Paterson, *The SPD and European Integration* (England and USA: Saxon House, Lexington Books, 1974), p. 51. Jürgen Bellers characterised the SPD's initial position towards the ECSC as one of 'careful, hesitant and partial sympathy', see Jürgen Bellers, *Reformpolitik und EWG-Strategie der SPD. Die innen- und außenpolitischen Faktoren der europapolitischen Integrationswilligkeit einer Oppositionspartei 1957-63* (München: tuduv-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1979), p. 73.

[98] Willy Eichler, 'Das Wahlprogramm der SPD', Speech on 10.5.1953, re-printed in Ossip K. Flechtheim (ed.), *Dokumente zur parteipolitischen Entwicklung in Deutschland seit 1945* (Berlin: Dokumenten-Verlag Dr. Herbert Wendler & Co., 1962), p. 125.

[99] Paterson, *The SPD and European Integration*, p. 52.

> The SPD is convinced that an organisation of Western Europe on the basis of the interests of heavy industry would be a fatal blow to democracy and the prospects of international co-operation between peoples on the basis of equality. The SPD reserves the final blow until it knows *the content of a series of discussions* (my emphasis). Especially important will be the equality of all partners, the position of the Ruhr Authority and the right of the German people to decide about questions of ownership in their economy.[100]

The SPD remained hesitant until the finalised version of the plan. German reunification had remained unmentioned.[101] As negotiations over the plan drew to a close and the exact contents of the plan became known, positions became more dogmatic and uncompromising in tone.[102] In April 1951, Schumacher repeated the party's motives for rejection: these were the insufficiency of German equality in the institutions and the inclusion of the whole of Europe (i.e. Scandinavia and Great Britain). As far as equality was concerned, this could only be achieved by relating each member's position to the country's share in production. As envisaged in the plan, Germany alone, so Schumacher criticised, would contribute 38.6 percent of the steel and 51 percent of the coal capacity.[103] Moreover, suspicions about French motives were included.[104] Hostility was outspokenly directed against France. Schumacher regarded the Schuman Plan as an obstacle towards European integration, and in practice it would only amount to Germany's self defeat vis-à-vis a clearly strengthened France.[105] It was also felt that the antitrust provisions of the treaty would destroy German industry and that the ECSC as a whole would institutionalise French hegemony.[106]

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[100] Ibid., p. 53.
[101] See also SPD press release 'Seven preconditions in order to support the ECSC', 20 April 1951, re-printed in Schumacher, *Reden, Schriften, Korrespondenzen 1945-1952*, p. 805.
[102] See also W. E. Paterson, *The SPD and European Integration*, p. 56.
[103] *Neuer Vorwärts*, No. 15, 13. April 1951, p. 2.
[104] Schumacher, 'Unser Nein zum Schumanplan', in *Hamburger Echo*, No. 93, 21. April 1951, re-printed in K. Schumacher, *Reden-Schriften-Korrespondenzen 1945-1952*, p. 806.
[105] *Neuer Vorwärts*, 'Alliierte oder europäische Politik', SPD Pamphlet on the Schuman Plan, No. 17, 27. April 1951, p. 6.
[106] See also Werner J. Feld, *West Germany and the European Community. Changing Interests and Competing Policy Objectives* (New York: Praeger Special Studies, 1981), p. 31.

Although the official party line remained largely uncontested and critical voices were rare. some important reservations were made. Reformers, such as Max Brauer[107] and Wilhelm Kaisen[108], for example, had already welcomed the Council of Europe as a forum in which the party could join forces with other social democratic groups to advance the cause of European political unification.[109] Paul Löbe[110] and Willy Brandt equally stressed that the Saar question should not be an obstacle to the participation to the Council and needed to be dealt with separately.[111] Brandt, Brauer and Löbe considered the 'road via Strasbourg' as the one that would ultimately pave the way for German reunification.[112] Carlo Schmid was probably the most outspoken supporter of the Schuman Plan and endorsed it with equal enthusiasm as Adenauer had done.[113]

Particularly strong objections to the Schumacher-led course were voiced by German trade union leaders. From the beginning, the German Trade Union Federation (DGB) adopted a positive line in principle. On 7 May 1951, the DGB expressed its official approval of the Coal and Steel Community, though not uncritically and with certain provisions.[114] Schumacher managed to re-enforce his line, in spite of the fact that this caused considerable difficulty for many trade union members, who were also members of the SPD.[115] With the rejection of the

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[107] Brauer was mayor of Hamburg, with some interception from 1953-1960.
[108] Mayor of Bremen from 1945-65. He had advocated closer association of West Germany with her Western European neighbours and the US and was thereby in disagreement with Schumacher over the SPD's foreign policy course.
[109] Dietrich Orlow, *Common Destiny, A Comparative History of the Dutch, French, and German Social Democratic Parties, 1945-1969* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000), p. 165.
[110] In the 1920s, Paul Löbe had strongly advocated the idea of a Pan-European Union; in the 1930s, he led the SPD-exile group in Prague. Since 1945, he was a leading foreign policy spokesman of the SPD.
[111] Dietmar Ramuschkat, *Die SPD und der europäische Einigungsprozess, Kontinuität und Wandel in der sozialdemokratischen Europapolitik 1949-1955* (Niebüll: Videel OHG, 2003), p. 93. Official party policy was that the Saar should not be sacrificed on the altar of European integration. In SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1950/1951* (Dortmund: Westfalendruck, 1951), p. 81.
[112] Hrbek, *Die SPD – Deutschland und Europa*, p. 98.
[113] Ramuschkat, *Die SPD und der europäische Einigungsprozess*, p. 100.
[114] See also Heinrich Potthoff, Susanne Miller, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD 1848-2002* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2002), p. 199.
[115] Ramuschkat, *Die SPD und der europäische Einigungsprozess*, p. 111.

Schuman Plan, Schumacher distanced himself from the trade unions and isolated the SPD from other social democratic parties in Europe.[116]

Contrary to the SPD, 'Europe' and all projects linked to it in the period after 1945 assumed a substantially minor role in the PCI's foreign policy thinking, until the beginning of the 1960s. The PCI's position was one of hostility towards all Western projects, whether 'European' or 'Atlantic', in fact most European projects did, according to PCI leaders, have an Atlantic, anti-Communist origin. A process of re-thinking within the PCI occurred at the beginning of the 1960s. The European outlook of the party intensified in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the early stages, the PCI perceived the European integration proposals as tools of American imperialism, which, in alliance with European monopolies, only intended to strengthen and consolidate their hegemony over the Western European continent. Accordingly, they were dismissed as a capitalist conspiracy that would, and in this the PCI's and SPD's rationale converged, only permanently divide the European continent in two. The PCI's unconditional alignment with the Soviet Union did not, at that stage, allow for any critical or original analysis of the Council of Europe, the ECSC, and the project to integrate Western Europe's military divisions.

Contrary to the DGB, the Italian communist and socialist trade union federation, the 'Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro' (CGIL), had distanced itself from the Schuman Plan. In the parliamentary debate over the ratification, Giuseppe Di Vittorio, the leader of the CGIL, declared that the politics behind the treaty were one of dividing Europe and its people.[117] Interestingly, however, the idea of economic integration inherent in the plan was not dismissed *per se*. It was something the CGIL would be principally willing to discuss, had it not been for the negative political connotation behind the treaty. The present form of

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[116] Kleßmann, 'Wiedervereinigung und deutsche Nation', p. 124.
[117] Giuseppe Di Vittorio, 'Sul trattato istitutivo della CECA', in Mauro Maggiorani and Paolo Ferrari (eds), *L'Europa da Togliatti a Berlinguer. Testimonianze e Documenti 1945-1984* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005), p. 227.

the Schuman Plan was not intended to unite but divide Europe and to institutionalise American hegemony in Europe.[118] According to Di Vittorio, the current plan would lead to Italy's subordination to foreign political and economic interests and render the national iron and steel industry available to foreign capitalism.[119] Hence, it would have disastrous consequences for the Italian working class.[120] Moreover, Di Vittorio attacked the lack of Italian 'equality' within the newly established institutions. The fact that the voting system within the High Authority was based on the principle of qualified majority would, so Di Vittorio, automatically imply that Italy was deprived of any 'political weight' in the decision-making process.[121] The most salient point, however, was that the CGIL leader seemed to agree to the principle of economic integration, if it involved more 'equality' for Italy and if the Italian coal and steel industry obtained more guarantees (within the institutions), as, for example, had been the case for the Belgium coal industry.[122] What Di Vittorio was really criticising was not the alleged 'inequality' but the fact that other countries may have negotiated a better or more profitable deal. It was the terms of the Treaty that were at stake as well as the fact that according to the trade union leader, Italy would render its national industry accessible to foreign capitalists.[123]

In contrast to the PCI, the CGIL was not altogether opposed to economic integration on a European level, if it was beneficial to the workers and the key industries in Italy.[124] Di Vittorio argued from the perspective of the Italian working class, whereas the PCI was still caught in Soviet polemics and Cold War thinking. The CGIL's analysis on the ECSC had been less rigid from the onset, while the PCI remained openly hostile until the beginning of the 1960s. It should also not go unmentioned that the Socialists constituted one-third of CGIL

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[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., p. 228.
[120] Ibid., p. 229.
[121] Ibid., p. 228.
[122] Ibid., p. 231.
[123] Ibid., p. 229.
[124] See also Primo Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO, and the European Community. The interplay of Foreign Policy and Domestic Policies*, No. 31 (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1974), p. 15.

members. Di Vittorio therefore had strong interests to avoid antagonising the PSI and the more pro-European elements within the CGIL. This had an undeniable impact on the PCI's policy reversal towards European integration.

Whether the PCI's posture on Europe was intransigent or considerably reasonable and moderate depends, of course, on the perspective from which it is viewed. In comparison with other West European communist parties, most notably its French counterpart, the PCI had from the start adopted a less dogmatic and ideologically motivated attitude towards European integration. A comparison with the SPD demonstrated that the PCI's position was not distinctively 'communist', but that hostility - even though for different, mostly national reasons - towards European integration was widespread and shared across the spectrum of Western European socialist, social democratic and communist parties. In Britain, for example, opposition to European economic integration was expressed by both main parties, Conservatives and Labour alike.

3) The SPD, the PCI and the project for a European Defence Community (EDC)

In October 1950, the then French Prime Minister, René Pleven, proposed the creation of a European Defence Community with the inclusion of West German troops. Pleven's proposal was the military equivalent to economic integration as envisaged in the Schuman Plan, which had involved the same six countries. Both the Italian Communists as well as the German Social Democrats heavily opposed the creation of a European Defence Community for reasons that were not entirely different.

Until his death in March 1953, Stalin continued to maintain the official Soviet position, such as that Moscow sought a united, albeit neutral and unarmed Germany.[125] In a series of notes in spring of 1952, Stalin had proposed that the four occupying powers draw up a Peace Treaty

[125] In fact some of the literature argues that the USSR was until 1954 ready to trade the Eastern sector for a militarily neutral Germany. See, for example, Ehrler, 'Zur Deutschlandpolitik der SPD', p. 85.

aimed at establishing such a united Germany, neutral and demilitarised, with all occupying forces removed and a government chosen by free, all-German elections.[126] SPD officials heavily criticised Washington and Bonn for their failure to enter negotiations with Stalin and to take the proposals seriously.

According to the SPD, there was plenty of time between Stalin's note of March 1952 and the Geneva summit conference in 1955 to test the sincerity of the Soviet Union. Consequently, the SPD attacked the West for these missed chances.[127] Herbert Wehner, a former Communist and one of the leading figures in the post-war SPD, sought to use the Stalin note to induce the West to enter negotiations with the Soviet Union.[128] Whether Stalin's proposals had been genuine is difficult to ascertain. In any case this was of secondary nature, the importance in the eyes of the SPD was to espouse and exploit every opportunity to negotiate to the fullest.

In the discussion over the Stalin note, the CDU did not act as cohesively as one would have imagined. Jakob Kaiser, minister for 'all-German questions', cooperated closely with Wehner on the issue, and argued for a closer examination of the note, whereby he heavily collided with the CDU mainstream around Konrad Adenauer.[129]

The EDC (as well as the ECSC) was rejected by Schumacher as a means to further institutionalise the country's division, provoking counteraction by the East and as being discriminatory towards Germany. This last aspect readdressed the issue of German equality. As far as the reunification aspect was concerned, this immediate goal had been faithfully reiterated at any party congress and in every major foreign policy declaration throughout the

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[126] Tony Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), p. 243.
[127] SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1954/55* (Hannover-Bonn: Neuer Vorwärts Verlag Nau & Co., 1955), pp. 13-14. See also Gordon D. Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition, 1949-1960* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), p. 287.
[128] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 164. A member of the German Communist Party until 1942, Wehner joined the SPD in 1946. There is a substantial bibliography on Wehner and his function in the Comintern. The Wehner historiography is divided between those who highlight Wehner's active and subversive role in the Soviet secret services, see, for example, Müller, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 11, p. 78 and p. 191; others explain his former activities as a struggle to survive, see Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 73. Seebacher-Brandt implies that Wehner deliberately used his former contacts for secret relations with the GDR later on, see Seebacher, *Willy Brandt*, p. 259.
[129] Ibid., p. 165.

1950s. It was to the primacy of reunification that all other interests were to be subordinated to. Accordingly, West Germany must only ratify international treaties if they did not contradict or further hinder this aim. The EDC was regarded as an obstacle to the process of reunification. Its rejection could only but follow logically. The SPD stressed the provisional nature of the present status quo and dismissed all attempts that would institutionalise it as permanent.[130]

The essence of Schumacher's condemnation of the ECSC, Adenauer's European policy, the Pleven Plan etc. was nationalist in character. He despised all of these integration bodies and methods as means to permanently deprive Germany of equal rights and secure 'the old French hegemony [over Germany] on a European level'.[131] Prevention of German reunification, an inescapable military escalation between the two opposing blocs and the failure to secure Germany's equality in the European army, were the chief motives for rejecting the EDC.[132]

Schumacher's 'nationalism' was justified by his experiences as a former Nazi-victim, who had spent many years in concentration camps and did not share any moral guilt in Germany's past.[133] While Schumacher could afford to be more nationalist than Adenauer and many in the CDU, this insistence on German equality did not pay off at elections times. West Germans preferred military security over neutrality and were little concerned about Germany's status in these institutions. This strong desire for security was further increased by the Soviet intervention in the workers' uprising in East Germany in June 1953.

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[130] 'Aktionsprogramm der SPD', agreed upon at the SPD Party Congress in Dortmund, 1952, and renewed and elaborated at the Berlin Congress of 1954, re-printed in Dowe and Klotzbach (eds), *Programmatische Dokumente der deutschen Sozialdemokratie*, pp. 317-321.
[131] Wolfgang Benz, 'Kurt Schumachers Europakonzeption', in Ludolf Herbst (ed.), *Vom Marshallplan zur EWG. Die Eingliederung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in die westliche Welt* (München: Oldenbourg, 1990), p. 58.
[132] 'Aktionsprogramm der SPD', decided upon at the 1952 Party Congress, elaborated upon at the 1954 Party Congress, re-printed in Dowe and Klotzbach (eds), *Programmatische Dokumente der deutschen Sozialdemokratie*, pp. 320-321. Kleßmann, 'Wiedervereinigung und deutsche Nation', p. 125.
[133] Kleßmann, 'Wiedervereinigung und deutsche Nation', p. 129.

The Italian Communists, on the other side, did not pay an enormous amount of attention to the subject. The general line was one of hostility and rejection of the defence project. The PCI did not clearly distinguish between 'European' and 'Atlantic' initiatives, as all were Western manoeuvres directed against the Soviet Union and the establishment of socialism in Eastern Europe. The PCI's conception of Western Europe was shaped by a strong 'anti-Atlantic' sentiment and European integration initiatives were seen as US attempts to secure economic domination over the Western half of the European continent. Economic integration was merely complementary to military steps – all directed against the Soviet Union, with the sole purpose of dividing the European continent into two counterposing economic and military blocs. The PCI's loyalty to Moscow was unconditional and the party made a clear choice of sides. Against this background the PCI aligned with the Soviet Union in the debate over the EDC, declared its strong objection to the creation of a European army, affirming that it would only further contribute to the division of Europe.

The comparison with the SPD demonstrated that positions cannot be attributed to a certain ideological camp. The PCI's opposition was not a uniquely 'communist' position (nor was the SPD's a particular social democratic stance) but a reasonably plausible rationale shared across a wide spectrum of parties from the centre-left or centre-right in Western Europe. The Italian Socialists, for example, had also continued their neutralism in foreign policy – which in practise meant adopting a pro-Soviet line, thereby aligning with the PCI. There was also a strong rejection and hostility against the EDC from the Italian public. Together with the PCI, the Italian Socialists under Nenni portrayed the opposition against a European army as a 'choice for peace' and promoted a policy of neutrality, which fiercely opposed the idea of the emergence of two counterposing military blocs. Opposition was, however, not solely confined

to the parties of the Italian Left; the Italian nationalist right also showed strong reservations against an EDC.[134]

The choices about the two fundamental themes in Italian foreign policy (as well as German and Western European in general) in the immediate post-war period – European integration and the Atlantic Alliance – were to be taken by the governing parties of the respective countries and therefore by the strong pro-US Christian democratic parties. Even they had been partly legitimised by outside factors, i.e. adherence to the US, so that it would be misleading to speak of their foreign policies as determined by 'true options'. This also implied that little room for manoeuvre was left for the opposition parties other than voicing their protest.

In an article published in *Rinascita*, Sergio Segre, a leading foreign policy spokesman of the PCI, emphasised that the defence treaty would have disastrous consequences for European peace. The treaty would profoundly divide Europe by creating a military bloc that was directed against other countries of the European continent. Furthermore, so Segre, it would deter and threaten German reunification and stressed that the latter was only possible if East Germany also entered the treaty.[135] Luigi Longo, a key figure in the PCI and Togliatti's successor after 1964, declared that the EDC would diminish Italian sovereignty, deprive the country of its control over the army and pave the way for German rearmament.[136]

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[134] Antonio Varsori, *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali dal 1943 al 1992* (Roma, Bari: Editori Laterza, 1998), pp. 98-99.
[135] *Rinascita*, 'Le conseguenze per l'Europa, La Comunità Europea di difesa', 7 February 1952.
[136] Luigi Longo, 'La CED divide l'Europa', in Maggiorani and Ferrari (eds), *L'Europa da Togliatti a Berlinguer. Testimonianze e Documenti 1945-1984*, p. 237.

4.) The SPD's policy towards the formation of NATO

Many German Social Democrats, most notably Herbert Wehner, had considered the demise of the EDC as a new opportunity to enter negotiations with the Soviet Union and only if these remained inconclusive and fruitless could West Germany uninhibitedly enter a Western defence system.[137] This was official party policy.[138] Apart from the parliamentary opposition against the ratification of the Paris treaties, the SPD engaged in the extra-parliamentary movement at the beginning of 1955.

DGB and the SPD jointly cooperated in the 'Paulskirche Movement' directed against Germany's inclusion in NATO. Together with the DGB, the SPD organised demonstrations against the Paris accords; on 29 January 1955, an assembly in the 'Paulskirche' in Frankfurt voted in favour of the so-called 'German Manifesto', according to which negotiations about a four-power agreement were to be given priority over military bloc building.[139] In a meeting held in the Paulskirche, Erich Ollenhauer, Georg Reuter (DGB) and Gustav Heinemann launched the Manifesto calling for an end to military integration with the West because of the damage it would do to German unity.[140] On 27 February 1955, German Parliament ratified the Treaties of Paris against the votes of the SPD and on 5 May 1955 the Treaties came into force.[141]

In essence, the SPD proposed that Germany (if reunification was to be achieved) must not enter any military obligations, which the other side would regard as a military threat. Rather, a German foreign policy must make the utmost effort to create a collective security system, to

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[137] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 187.
[138] SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1954/55*, pp. 13-14.
[139] Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition*, p. 290. See also Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 187.
[140] On the DGB and remilitarisation see Michael Schneider, *Kleine Geschichte der Gewerkschaften* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2000), pp. 302-303; see also Stephen Joseph Artner, *The SPD and NATO: The Transformation of Social Democratic Alliance Policy 1957-1961*, PhD (Bologna: The Johns Hopkins University, 1984), p. 53.
[141] In the final debate prior to voting in German parliament, Ollenhauer reiterated the SPD's position: 'Whoever, at this stage and in this situation, places the ratification of the treaties before new negotiations, or even before the mere attempt to arrive at such negotiations, thereby documents his preference under all conditions for the definitive integration of the Federal Republic in the North Atlantic Pact rather than for reunification', as quoted by Artner, *The SPD and NATO*, p. 54.

suspend both parts of Germany from its respective military commitments and integrate a reunified Germany into a European security pact.[142] Although German rearmament was, like in Italy, a highly controversial public issue in the 1950s, opposition to it did not prove to be vote-winning.[143]

The SPD's official position was never shared unanimously. Erich Ollenhauer, Schumacher's successor after 1954, had been to many German Social Democrats only somewhat of an interim leader. He nevertheless attempted to follow Schumacher's foreign policy course. Ernst Reuter[144] and Willy Brandt had from the onset of the Cold War been wholehearted supporters of Germany's integration with the West.[145] According to Brandt, Schumacher's uncompromising insistence on equality was totally unrealistic, as only Germany's disposition to integration would in turn lead to greater national sovereignty and equality.[146] At the beginning of the 1950s, Brandt had already advocated some of the principles and ideas that were to become official party policy in the 1960s and marked the basis of the SPD's Ostpolitik.

The SPD had opted for neutrality on 'national' grounds, because it believed that this was the best strategy to achieve German reunification.[147] German rearmament, whether achieved within an EDC or the Atlantic Alliance, would only provoke counter military action by the East, as it had been the case shortly after Germany's inclusion in NATO, with the creation of the Warsaw Pact.[148] SPD opposition to German rearmament continued in one form or another

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[142] 'Forderungen zur deutschen Wiedervereinigungspolitik', Resolution of the Party Congress held in Munich, 10-14 July 1956, re-printed in Ossip K. Flechtheim (ed.), *Dokumente zur parteipolitischen Entwicklung in Deutschland seit 1945*, pp. 134-135.
[143] Stefan Berger, *Social Democracy and the Working Class in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Germany* (London: Pearson Education, 2000), pp. 187-188. See also Kleßmann, 'Wiedervereinigung und deutsche Nation', p. 129.
[144] Reuter had been the first mayor of West Berlin from 1948 to 1953.
[145] See Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 198.
[146] See also Wolfgang Schmidt, *Kalter Krieg, Koexistenz und kleine Schritte : Willy Brandt und die Deutschlandpolitik 1948-1963* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2001), p. 537.
[147] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 323.
[148] SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1954/55*, p. 13.

up until 1960, but after the signing of the Western European Union (WEU) treaty, defence and European policy were no longer bound together. Though not exclusively, this prompted the SPD's change of course on European integration.

As we will examine later, nuances and subtle changes in the PCI's policy towards NATO became noticeable in 1969. A full and thorough policy reversal in favour of Italy's inclusion in the Alliance occurred in 1975. The PSI moved from a neutralist stand (which in 1949 took the form of total rejection against NATO) to a limited acceptance of the Alliance in the 1950s and eventually to complete acquiescence by 1962, in conjunction with and as a prerequisite for entering a governing coalition with the centrist parties.[149]

5.) A tentative revisionism: The impact of de-Stalinisation and the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Union on the PCI and the SPD's path to Bad Godesberg

The death of Stalin in 1953 and Khrushchev's revelations at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU held in February 1956 undoubtedly had an enormous impact on the PCI. It allowed for the re-emergence of the '*via italiana al socialismo*', which, temporarily abandoned with the onset of the Cold War, returned to the PCI's political agenda. Stalin's death in 1953 had given way to an internal power struggle within the Kremlin between Beria, Molotov, Malenkov and Khrushchev. By 1955, Khrushchev had emerged as the overall leader. At the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956, he initiated a series of strategic and doctrinal changes which would not leave the PCI unaffected in the long term.

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[149] Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO and the European Community*, p. 25.

The crucial point of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU was the acceptance of the principle of peaceful co-existence in international relations, the consequent abandonment of the doctrine of the inevitability of war with capitalist nations, as well as the possibility of national roads to socialism that differed from the Soviet model.[150] The possibility of national roads to socialism was, of course, not a novelty in Soviet foreign policy thinking. It had already been developed by Stalin and subsequently been abandoned in the immediate post-war era with the beginning of the Cold War.[151] The novelty was marked by Khrushchev's rejection of the rigidity of the two bloc theory and the inherent (limited) flexibility in international relations allowing for the possibility of 'peaceful coexistence'. The changes of 1956, in the short term, led the PCI to undertake a number of changes in its internationalism, which were clustered around the concept of polycentrism and the claim for limited forms of communist party autonomy. While de-Stalinisation was foremost a matter of identity, the national roads strategy had the potential of affecting the concept of socialism, and peaceful coexistence dramatically changed strategy vis-à-vis the West.[152]

As a profound shock to many communist parties, which had built their organisation and prestige around the myth of Stalin and the Soviet Union, came the non-official part of Khrushchev's speech and his revelations of Stalin's crimes.[153]

The most salient point in Togliatti's argument in response to these (and here the PCI again distinguished itself from other communist parties), was that it was not sufficient to simply denounce what Stalin had done and attribute all crimes to the negative consequences of the 'personality cult' centred around Stalin. It was also necessary to explain why it had been

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[150] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 261.

[151] In Europe, the national roads strategy became the official policy for the Western European communist parties during the Popular Front era (1934-39), and later on in the phase of 'national unity' at the end of the Second World War (1944-47). It was discarded after the founding of Cominform in 1947. See Maud Bracke, *Which Socialism, Whose Détente? West European Communism and the Czechoslovak crisis of 1968* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2007), p. 51. See also Giovanni Gozzini, Renzo Martinelli, *Storia del Partito comunista italiano VII. Dall'attentato a Togliatti all'VIII congresso* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 1998), p. 505.

[152] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, pp. 49-50.

[153] See also Blackmer, 'The International Strategy', p. 10.

possible for Stalin to make certain 'errors'. Togliatti dismissed the idea of the viability of the concept of 'personality cult', which could not be used as the universal key for the explanation of all problems within the Soviet system and in the international communist movement.[154] Stalin's errors, so Togliatti concluded, and its deeper roots may be found in the evolution of the Soviet political and social structures. Togliatti therefore dared to touch the delicate issue of the co-responsibility of the entire Soviet leadership group, which, according to him, required equally serious investigation.[155] Togliatti was the only communist leader to speak of a 'degeneration' of the Soviet system.[156]

Some historians stressed that Togliatti, however, refrained from systematic criticism of the Soviet regime for fear of bringing upon himself further Soviet criticism and hence the demise of his own party.[157] After all, so Togliatti calculated, by the mid-1950s, workers, cottage labourers etc. constituted for about two-thirds of the PCI's membership; intellectuals, students and white-collar employees (those who would adopt a more critical position on the Soviet Union) only a mere 3 percent.[158]

The criticism of the Soviet system also served to strengthen the concept of an 'Italian road to socialism', which had, in principle, characterised the PCI's post-war strategy. The re-emergence of a national road and a tentative revisionism, which was elaborated upon in subsequent years, were the most important outcome and consequences of the Twentieth Congress and Khrushchev's revelations. Togliatti declared at the PCI's Congress in December 1956 that the struggle for an Italian way to socialism was at the core of the party's operational policies, dismissing the concept of monolithism within the international communist movement, and attacked the rigid dogmatism that had been the guiding principle for the

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[154] Togliatti, 'Intervista a "Nuovi argomenti"', re-printed in Togliatti, *Opere Scelte*, p. 721.
[155] Blackmer, 'The International Strategy', p. 10.
[156] See also Silvio Pons, 'The Italian Communist Party between East and West, 1960-64', in Wilfried Loth (ed.), *Europe, Cold War and Coexistence, 1953-1965* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 98.
[157] Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, pp. 238-239.
[158] Ibid.

movement thus far.[159] Once monolithism was ruled out, full autonomy for each communist party was to become, according to the PCI leader, the guiding principle of the international communist movement, while the unity and co-ordination of the movement was to be secured via a number of regional centres or polycentrism.[160] The actual ideological battle of the PCI between 1956 and 1961 was centred on demolishing once and for all any attempt to return to a single organisational centre, which would grant the PCI with the much desired flexibility in national affairs.[161]

Togliatti's famous interview with *Nuovi Argomenti* in 1956 signalled an important step towards a process of revision which culminated in the late 1970s. Whereas the PCI's revisionism was triggered by external events, this process had also been paralleled by important domestic circumstances. By the mid-1950s, Italian capitalism was leading to an enormous economic expansion at the end of that decade. The trade union movement was deeply divided along party lines and the PCI had lost its majority among the workers in the Fiat works in Turin.[162]

In the middle of the 1950s, the PCI had faced a variety of challenges and was increasingly caught between numerous conflicting pressures: the party's solidarity with the Soviet Union, its domestic strategy, the Soviet position regarding European integration and the economic reality in Italy, the deviating position of the communist and socialist dominated trade union federation, and finally, the detachment of the Italian Socialists from the PCI and their subsequent flirtation with the parties of the centre.

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[159] In APC, MF 0515 0666-0668.
[160] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 108.
[161] Giancarlo Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto. Budapest, Praga, Varsavia* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1982), p. 77. See also Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 110.
[162] Sassoon, *Contemporary Italy*, p. 247.

5.1) The PCI and the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956

The Soviet invasion of Hungary in October and November 1956 brought an abrupt halt to the newly found freedom within the international communist movement by forcefully demonstrating the limits the CPSU was willing to cede and to grant the countries within its sphere of influence. It was also representative of the limits of PCI criticism vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and that despite all attempts to implement a national road to socialism, largely uncritical solidarity with Moscow still marked the guiding principle of the PCI's foreign policy. It revealed the severe limitations of the 'national roads' strategy. Though the Soviet reaction to the Hungarian events did not 'officially' break with this strategy, it marked the limits of it in a sense that was highly disadvantageous for the autonomy of communist parties and states worldwide vis-à-vis Soviet dominance.[163]

The PCI's reaction to the Soviet invasion of Hungary demonstrated that the obligation of international solidarity with the Soviet Union was still given priority over domestic political considerations. Although the PCI continuously sought to increase its own room for manoeuvre in national and foreign affairs in the following years, the PCI's subordination and failure to substantially criticise and condemn Soviet foreign policy would not change until 1968. The Soviet invasion of Hungary was justified by the PCI leadership as a 'severe necessity' in order to prevent the imperialist reactionary forces from coming to power in Hungary.[164] PCI reaction to Soviet repression of the Hungarian events showed above all the limits of PCI independence in foreign policy beyond which the party was unwilling to move at that stage.

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[163] On this question see Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 54.

[164] 'Dal rapporto all'VIII Congresso del PCI: la situazione internazionale e il movimento internazionale comunista', 8 December 1956, in Togliatti, *Problemi del movimento operaio internazionale 1956-1961* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1962), p. 217.

5.2) PCI-PSI relations after 1956

After the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956, the Italian Socialists engaged in a process of reassessing the relationship between socialism and democracy, culminating in the full acceptance of the democratic parliamentary road at the Party Congress in February 1957.[165] The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU and the condemnation of the Soviet invasion later that year marked a watershed for the PSI more than the PCI. The Italian Socialists distanced themselves from the Communists in the aftermath of the invasion and reversed their 'neutral' foreign policy posture, gradually revising its anti-Atlantic attitudes and came to fully endorse the government's 'Atlanticism' by the beginning of the 1960s.[166]

This, in turn, opened the way for subsequent centre-left governments at the beginning of the 1960s. Compared to the PSI, whose electoral score increased in the 1950s, the PCI's electoral achievements remained fairly stable in the 1950s, in spite of the de-Stalinisation process and the Soviet invasion of Hungary in October 1956.[167] Conversely it can be argued that they did not increase significantly because of the party's approval of the Soviet invasion. Thus, although the Soviet invasion of Hungary had some repercussions on the intellectuals in the PCI and considerably weakened the party's political influence due to a resultant break with the PSI, it did not compromise the party's mass electoral strength.[168]

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[165] Favretto, *The Long Search*, p. 35.
[166] Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO, and the European Community*, p. 25.
[167] See Appendix 3.
[168] Silvio Pons, 'The Italian Communist Party between East and West, 1960-64', p. 99.

5.3) The Bad Godesberg Programme: policy revisionism and the formation of a people's party

Revisionism was not confined to communist or socialist parties but transformations took place within the European Left in general. Not just socialist parties but political parties in general are, and have always been confronted with the need to change their policies and programmes, whether in adaptation to electoral demands, altered socio-economic circumstances or to distinguish themselves from the other opponents on the political market. This process is triggered by diverse reasons. The PCI, keen to re-launch and elaborate upon its *via italiana al socialismo*, implemented through structural reforms and via parliamentary means, needed some form of official sanctioning from Moscow. Nonetheless, as we have established before, there existed severe limitations to the 'green light from Moscow' and to the implementation of a truly 'national road of socialism'.

Contrary to the PCI's hesitant revisionism, which was more dependent on external legitimisation than on an outside impetus, the SPD's policy transformation was essentially triggered by domestic policy and electoral considerations. While continuing its uncompromising foreign policy course until 1960, the SPD's Bad Godesberg Programme marked the culmination of the party's economic policy revisionism.

At first glance, the most notable difference between the Bad Godesberg Programme and its predecessor of 1925, the Heidelberg Programme, was that Marxism remained unmentioned.[169] The SPD accepted the principles of the market economy, no longer demanded the nationalisation of the key and basic industries, and accepted the principles of the economic policy of the CDU/CSU. In doing so, the SPD hoped to widen its appeal, thereby to increase the party's share of votes and become an attractive and legitimate coalition partner.

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[169] Some historians highlight the fact that Marxism remained unmentioned as one the most outstanding features of the Godesberg Programme. See, for example, Hoffmann, *Geschichte der deutschen Parteien*, pp. 261-262.

A closer analysis of the programme - and the context within which it was elaborated - somewhat qualify its originality. The Bad Godesberg Programme is less spectacular and contained remarkably little renovation, especially when analysed in comparison with the party's previous manifestations and declarations. Although the *Aktionsprogramm* of 1952 (and the renewed and elaborated version of 1954) still demanded the transference of basic industries into public ownership[170] (a demand the Bad Godesberg Programme refrained from voicing), the Action Programme of 1954 had already included the much quoted demand of 'competition as much as possible, planning as much as necessary'.[171] In 1958, the SPD's economic expert, Heinrich Deist, had also declared that the abolition of private ownership was no longer a goal to be aspired. Rather, the more state control and influence were allowed to be exercised in the economy, the lower the possibilities for free development.[172]

This demand was reiterated in the Bad Godesberg Programme but was not a specificity of it and thus did not mark a novelty as such. The Bad Godesberg Programme was the official expression of a process of revisionism that occurred in the SPD between 1953 and 1959, triggered by a series of electoral defeats and the economic miracle - publicly endorsed and seen in conjunction with the government's economic policies and the impact of European integration. An interesting feature of the Bad Godesberg Programme is the fact that it sought common ground with the CDU/CSU, while it simultaneously avoided alienating its own supporters and the left-wing faction within the party. It was a compromise (as party programmes so often are) between modernisers and traditionalists, sharing the common ambition of assuming governmental power.

Its greatest success may in fact have been its vagueness and inherent ambiguities (also not an unusual feature of party programmes). The programme stressed general demands such as the

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[170] 'Aktionsprogramm der SPD', agreed upon at the Party Congress in Dortmund in 1952, elaborated at the Berlin Party Congress in 1954, re-printed in Dowe and Klotzbach (eds), *Programmatische Dokumente der deutschen Sozialdemokratie*, p. 328.

[171] Ibid., p. 329.

[172] SPD (ed.), *Protokoll der Verhandlungen des Parteitages der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands*, 18-23 May 1958 in Stuttgart, p. 185.

necessity for 'increasing prosperity' and 'a just share and distribution of the national product', 'full employment' and 'general economic prosperity' – largely undisputed calls which all German Social Democrats could wholeheartedly and uninhibitedly vote upon.[173] The revisionist programme, first discussed at the 1958 Party Congress in Stuttgart, was eventually put to vote the following year. The SPD leadership was confronted with no serious resistance for reasons discussed above. As such, its final approval was never seriously questioned.[174] The new programme was accepted by the party delegates by 324 votes to 16.[175] These were the new goals and marked the basis for both the immediate and long-term party strategy.

It is often held that the Bad Godesberg Programme, in contrast to the Action Programmes of 1952 and 1954, no longer overtly advocated the nationalisation (a term preferred over socialisation) of the key and basic industries.[176] However, just because the term was not used, one should not conclude that the nationalisation was renounced completely. In fact, public ownership was seen 'as a legitimate form of public control' in order to enshrine the freedom (of the individual) from the superiority of large monopolies.[177] As such, the programme was vague enough to account for the supporters of nationalisation, by allowing some sort of planning as a counterweight to the development of capitalism, or as a regulation of it.[178] This was justified by stressing that the central problem (of the capitalist system) was the economic power of large scale monopolies and in order to control the influence of the latter in the name of individual freedom and free competition, public ownership is appropriate and necessary.[179] The precise form and degree of this 'public ownership' remained open and was subject to speculation and individual interpretation. The supporters of nationalisation within the SPD

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[173] 'Grundsatzprogramm der SPD', Extraordinary Party Congress, held in Bad Godesberg, 13-15 November 1959, re-printed in Potthoff, Miller *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, pp. 496-497.
[174] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 223.
[175] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 249. See also Potthoff, Miller, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, p. 211.
[176] See, for example, Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition*, p. 261.
[177] 'Grundsatzprogramm der SPD', Extraordinary Party Congress, held in Bad Godesberg, 13-15 November 1959, re-printed in Potthoff, Miller, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, p. 497.
[178] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 250.
[179] 'Grundsatzprogramm der SPD', 13-15 November 1959, re-printed in Potthoff, Miller, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, p. 497.

could therefore read into this the demand for some degree of public ownership, without the issue being specifically addressed. Reformers within the party and parts of population, which were previously deterred by the SPD's demands for nationalisation, could be reassured by the party's new course of economic moderation.

One of the underlying goals was to attempt an overture towards the CDU/CSU. As such it was important that the manifesto's basic statements did not contradict with those of the Christian Democrats. The governing CDU had, however, been equally vague in its Hamburg Programme of 1953, advocating some tactical influencing of the economy through market-driven means and to establish the legal foundation for economic competition.[180]

As argued before, in order to fully comprehend the Bad Godesberg Programme, one needs to analyse its context. The process of rethinking had been triggered after Schumacher's death and the electoral defeat of 1953, when a working group under Willy Eichler was first established, and was further accelerated by the elections results of 1957.[181] External reform pressures were needed to establish a drafting group and to convince those within the party opposed to modernisation.[182] The SPD was continuously defeated at the polls – facing an ever stronger CDU – and came to realise, that if it wished to assume governmental responsibility, it not only needed to become a possible coalition partner and widen its appeal in West German society, but that it also needed to present itself as something completely new on the political market and widen its appeal beyond the traditional working class strata by dropping official party slogans and banners. As such, a party congress, called upon extraordinarily, generally provides the ideal platform for renovation. The desire to become an acceptable partner in government was an implicit expression of the Bad Godesberg Programme.

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[180] 'Hamburger Programm der CDU', 1953.

[181] There exists a substantial bibliography on Wehner's role in the SPD's revisionism as entailed in the Bad Godesberg Programme. The Wehner historiography is divided amongst those who attribute a key role to him in the process leading to the adoption of the programme in 1959 (see Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 222) and those who argue that Wehner hesitated long to jump on the moving train (Merseburger, *Willy Brandt*, p. 382). Müller's account of Wehner's communist past, his function as strategist and organiser in the KPD implies that Wehner's role in the post-war SPD was too crucial to have played a secondary role in the reform process: see *Herbert Wehner*, p. 23 and p. 26.

[182] See also Peter Lösche, 'Abschied von der Klassenpartei', p. 94.

The Bad Godesberg Programme was the official watershed of a process to become a people's party that had been long under way. This process was paralleled by a simultaneous re-thinking of the SPD's intransigent policies towards European integration (but not a reconsideration of the official line towards NATO as yet). As the national elections of 1953 and 1957 forcefully demonstrated, the SPD failed to accumulate votes beyond the traditional social democratic strata, the possibility to govern by itself was a more than unrealistic prospect, and the party's intransigent policies were unacceptable for any coalition partner. The SPD sought appeal beyond the working class and become a party which no longer hampers any class or group in the population.[183]

Domestic pressures and public opinion therefore accumulated in policy revisionism. A re-thinking towards European integration and the Bad Godesberg Programme of 1959 were the first manifestations of this.

The Bad Godesberg Programme was not about foreign policy. The foreign policy section only reiterated the more general and ongoing SPD demand which still identified national reunification as the party's most important goal. As a means towards achieving disarmament and détente in international relations, the SPD highlighted the need for regional security systems in the framework of the Unites Nations. A reunified (and fully sovereign) Germany should then be incorporated in such a European security system.[184] The SPD's campaign slogans for a reunification at the earliest possible stage, although undoubtedly desired by the majority of West Germans, did not prove to increase the party's electoral achievements. West Germans did not wish to 'trade' security within the Atlantic Alliance for a reunified Germany, as a buffer state in the East-West confrontation. After all, the Cold War tensions were still high, and détente only emerged in the 1960s. The underlying principle of the SPD's analysis therefore still was, as will be demonstrated below, that a solution of the German question was

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[183] Thompson, *The Political Odyssey of Herbert Wehner*, p. 179.
[184] 'Grundsatzprogramm der SPD', 13-15 November 1959, re-printed in Potthoff, Miller, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, p. 502.

a prerequisite for peace and security in Europe. This excluded participation in the Atlantic Alliance, which remained official party policy until June 1960.

Chapter 3

SPD and PCI policies towards NATO and the United States, 1960-1976

1.) PCI, SPD and the onset of the Cold War

In Italy, the period between 1946 and 1948 marked the transition from fragile wartime collaboration in the National Liberation Committee (CLN) to an uncertain post-war period dominated by the emerging bipolar East-West confrontation. Once the Italian Communists had been expelled from government in 1947 together with their socialist ally, and Italy's foreign policy became firmly imbedded in the West and in the newly established military alliance, little remained for the PCI to do but protest. After the exclusion from government and the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, the foreign strategy of West European communist parties was based on the fundamental rejection of the international alignment of their countries in conjunction with deteriorating East-West relations. The Cold War clearly exacerbated domestic contrasts and confrontations on the heterogeneous Italian domestic scenery. The decisive elections of 1948 ideologically divided the country in a Leftist bloc of PCI and PSI - henceforth forced into opposition - against a DC-led bloc together with some of the minor centrist parties. The Christian Democrats had been able to establish a power system which was largely unprecedented in Western democracies, while the largest force of the Left and strongest opposition party in general, remained stigmatised.[185]

In terms of foreign policy, the PCI's post-war moderation and constructiveness became influenced by deteriorating East-West relations and Soviet attacks on the PCI (i.e. with the adoption of the emerging vision of a bipolar world at the founding meeting of the Cominform in 1947). The PCI adopted an anti-Imperialist, pro-Soviet national foreign policy to overcome

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[185] Bruno Schoch, 'Eurocommunism and Defence: Do Western European Communists Feel Threatened by the Soviet Union? The Case of Italy', *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, Vol. 15, No.1 (1984), p. 28.

the Cold War bipolarisation, demanding an end to the East-West division and the withdrawal of all military troops from Italy.

Parallel to NATO's birth and Italy's inclusion as a founding member, West Germany became 'formally' independent on 8 April 1949, albeit still divided, demilitarised and under Allied occupation until 1955. Both Italy's and Germany's reconstruction in the widest sense was strongly dependent in economic, political and military terms on the United States and the Atlantic Alliance. Neutrality had not been an option. Due to Germany's specific geopolitical situation as a front line country in the volatile East-West relations, re-militarisation was a national security question of paramount importance. Changes in the international climate possibly put at stake national security. The Federal Republic had been more directly confronted with the pressures of the Cold War than any other European nation. Remilitarisation was a national issue all Western German political parties were confronted with. Rearmament and entry into the Western Alliance were also the essential preconditions for the restoration of German national sovereignty.

However, contrary to the PCI, the SPD had not been ideologically constrained. Hence, it did not oppose West German remilitarisation within the EDC or NATO in principle, or on pacifist grounds, but because it ran counter to the SPD's national reunification concept by presenting an obstacle to it and provoking counteraction in the East.[186] As such, German rearmament, in whatever form, was seen as a further impediment to national reunification. Apart from domestic political considerations, Italy's attitude towards NATO has been from the beginning, contrary to Germany's, determined not so much by a concern for security as by its search for a role in world politics. Italy's interest in questions of military strategy had been rather minimal; its major effort had been to gain recognition as an important member of the

[186] Karsten Voigt, *Wege zur Abrüstung* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn Verlag, 1981), p. 127.

Alliance. A similar rationale stood behind the SPD's strategic reassessment vis-à-vis the Atlantic Alliance: SPD leaders attempted to increase the party's status within Germany as a result of an unequivocal acceptance of the military alliance. Later, support of the Atlantic Alliance (and NATO as an integral part) was paramount to the SPD's Ostpolitik. The SPD could not have conducted its Ostpolitik successfully if it had not been supported by the United States or Germany's Western neighbours. Later, Ostpolitik became a field where the FRG could demonstrate that it could look after its interests with self-confidence, always in accordance with the general Western course of détente but not merely echoing French and American interests.[187] Acceptance of the Alliance was thus also a first step towards gaining greater recognition and a say in international affairs to ultimately develop an independent foreign policy that could rely on the support of the Western Alliance.[188]

Here it will be argued that adherence to NATO was seen by both SPD and PCI, at least initially, as a necessary means to an end. Although due to a lack of ideological constraints more 'Atlanticist' in principle, the SPD, if analysed from a party and rank-and-file perspective, was less US enthusiastic and more critical than what was conveyed by an often somewhat distorted official party picture. This discrepancy of perspective between different party wings, and the governmental and non-governmental levels of the SPD, was forcefully expressed over the debate of the stationing of new missiles in Western Europe at the beginning of the 1980s. Central to this were the in general, more widely diverging views over military deterrence as an appropriate means of securing détente in East-West relations.

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[187] Gottfried Niedhart, 'Ostpolitik and its impact on the Federal Republic's relationship with the West', in Wilfried Loth (ed.), *The making of détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75* (Oxon: Routledge, 2008), p. 124.
[188] Fritz Erler in SPD (ed.), *Protokoll des Parteitages der SPD*, 26 - 30 May 1962 in Cologne (Hannover, Bonn: Neuer Vorwärts-Verlag Nau & Co., 1962), p. 199.

In comparison with the SPD, the PCI's policy reversal towards NATO departed from a similar (realistic) calculation, it was a strategic means to a certain end. The party's acceptance of NATO did not result from a sudden enthusiasm for the Atlantic Alliance (or from a changing nature of the Alliance itself) but from the realisation that Italy belonged to a certain political-military bloc. If the PCI wanted to become a *partito di governo* (party of government) it had to acknowledge this external element and adapt to it. The crux to the PCI's concept of the 'logic of the blocs' was the realisation that two military camps existed (and would do so for an uncertain period of time) and that the party would have to 'move within the existing realities', i.e. obey to the foreign policy rules as imposed from the outside. Both SPD and PCI had come to realise that long-term domestic opposition to international realities had little chance of success.

As a result of Italy's and Germany's most recent history, neither country could hope to originate a truly independent national foreign policy. Acceptance of both NATO and European integration became paramount in regaining national sovereignty and a minimal say in international affairs. They were the necessary means to end foreign occupation and gain a higher degree of international equality. This practice was left unchallenged to a somewhat greater extent in Italy, than in Germany. As one will notice in the context of the missile debate at the end of the 1970s, Italian leaders expected to increase the country's status within the Atlantic Alliance as a result of missile installations. Even purely strategic decisions were approached in terms of prestige rather than security considerations.[189] Again, national security considerations had a much greater impact on strategic policy decisions in Germany than in Italy.

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[189] Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO, and the European Community*, p. 23.

For the German Social Democrats and the Italian Communists, as for most other national parties in Western Europe, full endorsement of their country's key foreign policy principles - European integration and loyalty to the United States and NATO - were thus the mandatory path to governmental co-operation. Western European integration and NATO marked the twin pillars of Italy's and Germany's foreign policy. An analysis of the SPD's and PCI's policy reversal on NATO (as well as their security policies and stand in the East-West confrontation in general) is illustrative and provides an interesting case study of how the positions of political parties are often symbolic of the use made of international questions for domestic purposes. Acceptance of adherence to NATO did not depend so much on a 'free choice' of the parties, but as we shall see, it was often an almost obligatory path deriving from the nature of the bipolar system in search for national foreign policy consensus. In this the SPD and the PCI largely converged and this recognition formed an essential part of the ambitions of the two parties to integrate themselves into their domestic political system and society.

Once a policy reversal was accomplished, neither party was a wholehearted or enthusiastic supporter of the military alliance in principle. Largely unequivocal endorsement of NATO became an integral part of an (often) critical 'Atlanticism' practised by both parties alike. For ideological reasons, the Italian Communists were of course much more US-sceptic, yet, pro-Americanism was somewhat less widespread in the SPD than one would have imagined.

As we will examine later with regard to the euromissile debate in the late 1970s, there existed a high correlation between domestic policies and strategies and certain positions regarding the Atlantic Alliance. Foreign policy decisions and strategies can often only be fully comprehended when viewed from a domestic policy context. One would assume that political parties, when in power, often feel bound by external constraints (i.e. decisions taken within the Alliance and vis-à-vis the US ally) or internally, by inner-coalition agreements and are more liberal to object when in parliamentary opposition. With regard to the PCI's security

policies in the prevailing superpower confrontation, as the NATO dual-track decision will further demonstrate, the Communists' choices, when in opposition, were as profoundly shaped by external and internal constraints in the late 1970s as those of the governing SPD during the same period of time. The debate of new missiles on European territory provides a highly interesting case study for the correlation and strong interdependence between domestic strategies and foreign policy choices.

2.) The SPD's foreign policy reassessment: in search of a foreign policy consensus

Some historians pay greater attribute to international reasons (or a change of the given political realities)[190], some to inner-party power constellations[191], or electoral motivations[192] when accounting for the sudden policy shift in the SPD's security policy thinking and the fundamental policy reversal regarding West Germany's adherence to NATO. The prevailing geopolitical realities and Moscow's reluctance to German reunification most certainly accelerated the SPD's call for a more realistic foreign policy approach. However, the move toward a foreign policy consensus with the CDU/CSU on the basis of West Germany's unquestioned adherence to the Atlantic Alliance was certainly also directly, if not primarily, motivated by domestic political ambitions. The SPD's previous 'policy of polarisation' and isolationist course, confronting West Germans with an 'either or choice', had been almost exclusively beneficial for the CDU/CSU. Although pacifism and opposition to German rearmament were undoubtedly widespread amongst West Germans in the mid-1950s (as

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[190] Reinhard Mutz, 'Atlantische Abschreckung und europäische Entspannung: Kritische Analyse des Sicherheitskonzeptes der SPD', in Gerhard Kiersch and Reimund Seidelmann (eds), *Sicherheit und Entspannung. Die Antwort des demokratischen Sozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, Köln: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1977), p. 24. See also Andrea H. Schneider, *Die Kunst des Kompromisses: Helmut Schmidt und die Große Koalition 1966-1969* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 1999), p. 25.

[191] See Abraham Ashkenasi, who argued that the sudden rise of power of the group around Brandt was responsible that the foreign policy concept of the Berlin SPD was adopted by the federal SPD, in *Reformpartei und Außenpolitik* (Köln, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1968), p. 186.

[192] Reiner Marcowitz, *Option für Paris? Unionsparteien, SPD und Charles de Gaulle 1958 bis 1969* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), p. 89.

manifested in the 'Paulskirche' movement), the SPD's concept of national reunification did not amount, as the 1953 and 1957 national elections expressed, to sufficient parliamentary success.[193]

2.1) The failure of the 'Deutschland Plan'

The most manifest expression of the SPD's failure to grasp the prevailing international circumstances was the party's Deutschland Plan (published on 19 March 1959). The SPD's 'Deutschland Plan', or German Plan, was a political construction that remained largely ignored at the time of its launch, but became highly controversially debated amongst historians, decades after its rapid demise. The most interesting question to address here is not what the plan precisely consisted of or an analysis of its inherent flaws or why it failed, but *why* the plan was introduced at all and supported by its initiators (at least officially) well into spring of 1960.

The SPD's reunification initiative as envisaged in the party's Deutschland Plan was largely ignored by the West German public and the Western Allies (during the Geneva conference of 1959) alike, and was controversially debated within the SPD itself.[194] If examined exclusively from an inner-party perspective, it was certainly one of the most contentious political constructions at the time. In most of the literature, it is correctly analysed as the SPD's final effort to come to early reunification on neutral, demilitarised grounds (and thereby present an alternative to the government's policies), before the party's foreign policy U-turn in June

[193] Voigt, *Wege zur Abrüstung*, p. 127.
[194] Artner, *The SPD and NATO*, pp. 218-219.

1960.[195] It was the last 'social-democratic' contribution to solving the German question based on a neutral foreign policy before the SPD fully embraced bipartisanship in foreign policy. In essence, the Deutschland Plan of the SPD envisaged a number of individual steps towards a military relaxation of tension leading ultimately towards national reunification, via a withdrawal of all foreign troops and free national elections in a reunited (neutral) Germany imbedded in a European security system.[196] The feasibility of this reunification initiative was more than minimal, given the fact that Moscow was barely interested in achieving reunification of a neutralised Germany (one of the few points of convergence between the two superpowers).[197] By 1955 the FRG had become a NATO member, the Eastern side followed suit by turning the GDR into a Warsaw Pact member, and the 'German question' had become 'solved' by firmly anchoring the two parts into their respective alliances. Many SPD leaders were, in private, not at all optimistic given the fact that after the FRG's inclusion in NATO (and the GDR in the Warsaw Pact), the goal to achieve reunification became more improbable than ever.[198] For instance, in March 1959, Fritz Erler and Carlo Schmid, two leading foreign policy spokesmen, held talks with Soviet leaders - the outcome of which had led both Social Democrats to conclude that the Soviet Union had no intention in achieving German reunification but to maintain a separate East German state as her close ally.[199] Although

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[195] See, for example, Helga Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung*, p. 96. See also Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition, 1949-1960*, p. 252; Susanne Miller, 'Die SPD vor und nach Godesberg', in Richard Löwenthal and Hans-Peter Schwarz (eds), *Die zweite Republik* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1974), p. 388.

[196] The SPD's German Plan envisaged reunification in four stages, at the end of which free elections would be held for an all-German parliament and government. See Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition*, p. 250.

[197] Jürgen Bellers, *EWG und die "Godesberger" SPD*, Schriften des Faches Politikwissenschaften, No. 9 (Siegen: Universität Siegen, 2003), p. 314. Udo F. Löwke, for example, emphasised that the SPD's concept of reunification without adhering to a military bloc but imbedded in a collective security system should not be dismissed as unrealistic from the start. It was the power political circumstances which caused its failure. Udo F. Löwke, *Für den Fall, dass...SPD und Wehrfrage 1949-1955* (Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1969), pp. 225-226.

[198] W. Schmidt held that Brandt, after the failure of the Four-Power conference on Berlin in January 1954, had already favoured West German integration in NATO since the Soviet Union was not interested in German reunification – even if on neutral grounds, see W. Schmidt, *Kalter Krieg*, p. 538.

[199] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 228. See also Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition*, p. 252; Hartmut Soell, *Helmut Schmidt 1918-1969* (München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2003), p. 324.

Soviet plans on the GDR had always been difficult to determine, it became clear after 1955 that the Soviet Union was aiming towards a two-state solution.

Despite these discouraging and gloomy reports, the SPD still published its plan – in complete disregard of geopolitical realities.[200] Hence it is astonishing that the plan was elaborated and ever made public at all. This leaves us largely puzzled about why it was published (and not abandoned earlier), if its authors had recognised that it barely stood any chance of realisation.

Here it will be argued that it was intended as a final concession towards the 'left-wing' of the SPD, those Social Democrats around the former Schumacher / Ollenhauer group and Herbert Wehner, who wished to achieve reunification on neutral grounds at the earliest possible stage, before bipartisanship in foreign policy could be embraced. Those around Brandt and the West-Berlin SPD on the other hand, had dismissed the plan as neither desirable nor realistic, but as a political compromise or necessary concession towards the Wehner group in order to then (after the plan's failure) move towards a bi-partisan foreign policy together with the leading CDU/CSU. The publication of the Deutschland Plan was agreed upon by its inner-party opponents precisely on the calculation that it would encounter Soviet resistance (or be ignored by the Western Allies) and consequently be doomed to failure. It was the political price to pay for a subsequent move to the Right. This is not to suggest that the Bonn and Berlin wings of the SPD diverged over the idea to achieve reunification *in principle*, but their means to accomplish this were almost diametrically diverse. To the Bonn SPD it had been *the* most important short-term goal, whereas in Berlin a tendency had developed towards thinking in a much longer time scale, bearing in mind that the German problem was firmly imbedded in and inseparably linked with the wider East-West conflict. As such, the Deutschland Plan could have been taken as a calculated move to the Left, which turned out to be one of the essential preconditions for a subsequent move to the Right (a foreign policy convergence with

[200] See, for example, W. Schmidt, who correctly argued that the plan was doomed to fail as it completely ignored the political realities, in *Kalter Krieg*, p. 539.

the CDU/CSU in the framework of West Germany's firm and undisputed adherence to the West).

Serious differences about how to proceed in the German question had always existed between the Berlin and Bonn SPD.[201] In November 1958, a Soviet note caused a second major crisis over Berlin (after the Berlin blockade of 1948/49 when Stalin had already shut off the overland access to Berlin). The Soviets' note to the Western Allies and West Germany demanded an end to the occupation of Berlin and the conversion of West Berlin into a demilitarised free city. When Khrushchev set off the second Berlin crisis in late 1958 by threatening to conclude a separate peace treaty with the GDR that would nullify Allied agreements and transfer control of the transit routes to the non-recognised East Germans, both the Western access to Berlin and its policy on Germany were once more in danger. The Bonn SPD generally agreed on the need for negotiations, pressing ahead with talks at all costs (even if rejecting the precise contents of the Soviet note) and accusing the Adenauer government for failing to do so. After the Stalin note of 1952, the SPD had already preferred to put Stalin's sincerity to the test. After the failure of the EDC in the French national assembly, the SPD renewed its demands for negotiations with the Soviets. Only if those remained fruitless, would it be 'justifiable' for the FRG to enter the Atlantic Pact.[202] Belief in the primacy of reunification and the necessity of exploring every possibility (towards that end) were the basis of the SPD's foreign policy concept thus far.

The group around Brandt, on the other hand, disagreed with the social democratic leadership that the 1958 Berlin crisis offered a chance to negotiate. In this, the Berlin SPD had already embarked on a foreign policy course that had more in common with that of Adenauer than the SPD leadership in Bonn. Willy Brandt had urged unity with the West in trying to eventually

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[201] Bellers, *EWG und die "Godesberger" SPD*, pp. 318-319. See also Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition, 1949-1960*, pp. 245-247. See also Ashkenasi, *Reformpartei und Außenpolitik*, p. 13.
[202] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 187.

promote reunification. Brandt's thinking had been strongly determined by the living conditions of West Berlin's population (in his experiences as mayor of Berlin), the city's frontline role in the Cold War, and how its security and survival would have to be artificially maintained in the event of a political and military escalation (i.e. Berlin crisis of 1948/49).[203] Fritz Erler, for example, by the late 1950s one of NATO's most enthusiastic supporters, had during the EDC debate already contested the view that West Germans should refrain from addressing the question of remilitarisation and defence until reunification had been achieved.

The authors of the Deutschland Plan failed to take into consideration that the German question had long ceased to be solely a 'national' issue, that a neutral, reunified Germany was unfavourable to US or Soviet interests, let alone ignoring sentiments of many Western Germans, who felt safer under NATO's protection. Desire for military protection and material improvement of the living conditions had become increasingly interwoven and associated with economic and military integration in the West. West Germans were not willing to 'trade' security for reunification, let alone for the SPD's adventurous plans for a demilitarised zone or neutral Germany.[204] It was widely assumed that the majority of West Germans undoubtedly desired national unity. Of even greater concern, so it was assumed by decision-makers, was national security from the Soviet Union and that most Germans were unprepared to make economic sacrifices for national reunification.[205]

During a meeting of the SPD's Executive in March 1960, Carlo Schmid had already declared that Moscow was reluctant to negotiate, and that a demilitarised zone was of little interest to the Soviets. He thus concluded that the geopolitical situation had altered to the extent that a

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[203] W. Schmidt, for instance, assessed that Willy Brandt had already been an enthusiastic supporter of NATO in the period of Germany's early post-war reconstruction. Brandt endorsed NATO essentially for two reasons: as a military deterrent vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and secondly as a means to achieve close political and economic cooperation with the West. See W. Schmidt, *Kalter Krieg*, p. 537.
[204] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 181.
[205] Ibid.

two-state theory was the only chance to secure the survival of West Berlin.[206] His views had, however, still remained mainly isolated at the time. With the Deutschland Plan, the SPD also attempted to provide a social-democratic contribution to the four power discussions after the 1958 Berlin crisis and to the foreign minister conference held in Geneva in 1959. It marked a SPD-initiative which was in line with the party's primacy of reunification.[207] The Geneva conference not only completely disregarded any of the SPD's proposals, but proved itself to be a dismal failure as regards to any prospect of reunification.[208]

2.2) Acceptance of NATO and the move towards a bi-partisan foreign policy

Changes in the international setting therefore partially contributed to the acceptance of the existing post-war realities by strengthening those positions in the SPD, which had opted to generate the foreign policy ground for a subsequent cooperation with the CDU/CSU. The move towards a bi-partisan foreign policy was in part also a resignation of the given geopolitical circumstances disfavouring reunification. Many of the SPD's positions adopted from June 1960 onwards were thus no novelty and not a complete U-turn in policy thinking, but were existent, although in minority, since the 1950s and had been hitherto dismissed.

Domestic electoral support (or lack of it) forcefully accelerated the SPD's change of course. The 1953 and 1957 election results demonstrated that the SPD's 'policy of polarisation' had proved counterproductive by demonstrating the electorate's support for Konrad Adenauer's economic and military alignment with the West. Economic boom and military security had outweighed previous opposition to rearmament in the eyes of many West Germans. Thus, while international factors justified a shift in SPD foreign policy (justification mainly vis-à-

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[206] Protocol of the SPD's Executive meeting, 12 March 1960, re-printed in Willy Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe, Berlin bleibt frei: Politik in und für Berlin 1947-1966* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2004), pp. 288-292.
[207] 'Außenpolitik und gesamtdeutsche Fragen', in SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1958/59* (Hannover, Bonn: Neuer Vorwärts Verlag, Nau & Co., 1959) p. 24. See also Kleßmann, 'Sozialdemokratie und deutsche Frage', in Dowe (ed.), *Sozialdemokratie und Nation in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, pp. 45-46.
[208] Artner, *The SPD and NATO*, pp. 218-219.

vis inner party opponents), electoral considerations prompted the policy reassessment. To suggest a direct interrelation with the SPD's Bad Godesberg Programme of 1959 is only revealing in as much as it is illustrative of the SPD's general trend to become a people's party.[209] Establishing domestic and foreign policy consensus (with the leading CDU/CSU) were unquestionably the two twin components of the SPD's strategy to achieve governmental respectability and responsibility. The path to Bad Godesberg was prepared for carefully and thoroughly since the electoral defeat of 1953, and put to a vote at an extraordinary party congress. The change to the SPD's operational strategy (i.e. acceptance of NATO) could only occur suddenly in order to prevent a fierce internal debate.[210]

The final abandonment of the Deutschland Plan was thus solely an expression of the SPD's dismissal of its previous reunification concept that had categorically excluded West German adherence to the Atlantic Pact, as well as firm integration in the West in general. It paved the way for the SPD's almost sudden policy reversal in June 1960. In a much quoted and famous speech in German parliament on 30 June 1960, Herbert Wehner declared that 'the Federal Republic's Western ties must form the basis for all West German efforts toward security, reunification and détente'.[211] Interestingly though, Wehner, one of the firmest supporters of the SPD's 'old' foreign policy line was, from June 1960, one of the key constructors behind a coalition with the CDU/CSU.

Defence (within NATO) and détente (on the basis of active peaceful coexistence with the East) marked henceforth the twin components of the SPD's security policy concept and were loyally reassured in the party's government programme prior to the 1961 national elections, at

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[209] See, for example, Paterson who argued that Wehner's speech in June 1960 can be seen as the foreign policy equivalent to the Bad Godesberg programme, in *The SPD and European Integration*, p. 141.
[210] Egon Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit* (München: Karl Blessing Verlag, 1996), pp. 278-279.
[211] Re-printed in Herbert Wehner, *Wandel und Bewährung. Ausgewählte Reden und Schriften 1930-1980*, 5th edition (Frankfurt, Berlin: Ullstein, 1981), p. 240. See also Herbert Wehner, *Bundestagsreden* (Bonn: Verlag AZ Studio, 1970), pp. 197-215.

every party congress, in almost every foreign policy statement and party programme throughout the 1960s and 1970s.[212] Most importantly, they were compatible with Western interests and unequivocally endorsed Adenauer's Western policy course (Westpolitik) embarked upon thus far.

3.) Italian political parties and NATO

Domestically, opposition to NATO was not exclusive to the Italian Communists and their junior partner, the PSI. During the 1949 debates on the Atlantic Treaty, a significant portion of the Italian political elite - a wide group cutting across many parties - had strong objections to any military alliance. With exception of the Italian Social Democrats (PSDI), both the Italian Left and influential Catholic circles inside the DC and the Vatican rallied to oppose any national alignment with NATO. The Catholic front was sharply divided between the official pro-Western DC and governmental line on one side, and the neutralist-nationalistic, partly anti-American left wing opposition within the party.[213] The PSI had traditionally remained committed to neutralism and an (in principle) equidistance between East and West, and objected to Italy becoming the battleground between pro-Soviet Left and pro-Western conservative forces. Its alignment and subordination to PCI interests, of course, somewhat qualified and weakened the party's credibility in demanding Italy's neutrality. Though the PSI's stress on neutralism in foreign policy derived from socialist ideology and tradition, its

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[212] See Willy Brandt's speech at the Party Congress, in SPD (ed.), *Das Regierungsprogramm der SPD* (Außerordentlicher Kongress der SPD), 28 April 1961, Bonn, 1961, pp. 3-22. See also SPD (ed.), *SPD Jahrbuch 1960/*61 (Hannover, Bonn: Neuer Vorwärts Verlag Nau & Co., 1961), p. 19; SPD (ed.), *SPD Jahrbuch 1964/1965* (Bad Godesberg: Neuer Vorwärts Verlag Nau & Co., 1965), p. 57; SPD (ed.), *SPD Jahrbuch 1966/1967* (Bad Godesberg: Neuer Vorwärts Verlag Nau & Co., 1967), p. 62; 'Kundgebungen und Entschließungen des Nürnberger Parteitages 1968', in SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1968/1969* (Bonn-Bad Godesberg: Neuer Vorwärts Verlag Nau & Co., 1969), p. 339; 'Kundgebungen und Beschlüsse des Außerordentlichen Parteitages in Dortmund', 12-13 October 1972, in SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1970/1972* (Bad Godesberg: Neuer Vorwärts-Verlag Nau & Co., 1972), p. 553.

[213] Marco Rimanelli, *Italy between Europe and the Mediterranean. Diplomacy and Naval Strategy from Unification to NATO, 1800s-2000* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), p. 719. See also Rainer W. Klaus, 'Überwindung der Blöcke: Konzeptionen der italienischen Linken zur Entspannung und Sicherheit in Europa', in Gerhard Kiersch and Reimund Seidelmann (eds), *Sicherheit und Entspannung in Europa. Die Antwort des demokratischen Sozialismus*, p. 81. Natalino Ronzitti, 'Italian Political Parties and European Integration', *Lo Spettatore Internazionale*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January-March 1975), p. 11.

opposition to NATO was (correctly) seen as evidence of the Socialists' subjection to the PCI during the first post-war decade.[214] The Socialists later moved from a neutralist stand (and total rejection of NATO) in 1949 to a limited acceptance of the Alliance in the 1950s and eventually to complete acquiescence by 1962 in conjunction with the party's entry into the government coalition. Of course, the development of the SPD and PSI implied that for any Western European party to be considered a party of government, it would necessarily have to accept its country's fundamental foreign and defence policy choices. Or conversely, national political ambitions rendered a thorough policy re-thinking fundamental.

The PCI has fought Italy's incorporation in NATO from the very beginning. In this, it gave way to neutralist leanings shared by much wider parts of the Italian political spectrum, including (like in Germany) Catholic, socialist and trade union circles, and was thus not exclusive to communist parties.[215] A significant section of the public assigned little importance to NATO as a military alliance. An opinion poll conducted in 1958, when the Cold War had not abated but gained new proportions, showed that only 50 percent of the respondents favoured Italy's continued membership in the Alliance.[216] Although opinion polls are by no means solely representative, they do reveal some interesting insight in general political trends. This also suggests that opposition to rearmament or NATO was not representative of 'communist' policy thinking but rather, as the euromissile debate of the late 1970s will further demonstrate, that it was not possible to determine an exclusively 'social-democratic' or solely 'communist' policy line. Rather, domestic considerations interplayed with foreign policy positions to the extent that it is impossible to identify specific or exclusive positions and attribute them to a certain political camp.

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[214] Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO, and the European Community*, p. 8.
[215] See also Michael Strübel, *Neue Wege der italienischen Kommunisten. Zur Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik der KPI (1973-1981)* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1982), p. 196.
[216] Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO, and the European Community*, p. 24.

Since the foundation of NATO, the PCI had perceived the North Atlantic Pact as the military instrument of American imperialism established solely to secure capitalism in Europe. This was part of a hostile and aggressive foreign policy against the Soviet Union and hence objected accordingly.[217] This was not to alter fundamentally until the mid-1970s. In 1971, Alessandro Natta, a PCI foreign policy spokesman, had still declared that 'Atlanticism, US economic and military presence in Italy served as a guarantor of the conservative bloc, of a system that above all revolves around strengthening the power and privileges of bourgeois capitalism and its political representative'.[218] Nuances in party speeches and articles in the communist weekly *Rinascita* were, however, noticeable since the end of the 1960s, but a fundamental policy reversal only occurred in 1974.

PCI Party Congress resolutions and policy statements in the 1960s generally revolved around and repeated the demand for Italy's neutrality, a discard of any foreign intervention in internal affairs, an end to all military bases in the country and the overcoming of the two blocs in favour of a new peace settlement.[219] The PCI continuously stressed that it favoured an Italian foreign policy based on 'active neutrality', as only this neutrality, so the PCI believed, would provide the government with the possibility to launch new initiatives for coordinated and mutual disarmament, a simultaneous dissolution of both military blocs and the creation of a collective security system in Europe.[220]

Comparable with the SPD's foreign policy advances in the 1950s, PCI demands failed to take into account the existing post-war realities. Italy, firmly imbedded in the West, of course

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[217] See Togliatti's speech against NATO, 12 March 1949, re-printed in Hanhimäki, Westad (eds), *The Cold War*, pp. 133-134.
[218] *Rinascita*, Alessandro Natta, 'Il legame che soffoca', 26 February 1971, p. 2.
[219] Togliatti, 'Per l'unità del movimento comunista internazionale', 10th Congress of the PCI, 1962, pp. 24-25 and 'Tesi del XI Congresso nazionale 1966', p. 108, both in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano. IV 1964-1975* (Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 1985).
[220] *Rinascita*, Longo, 'La cattiva coscienza degli oltranzisti', 22 September 1967, p. 2.

could not have remained neutral in a bipolar world characterised by East-West hostilities: rather conversely, only adherence to the Western Alliance would increase a say in international affairs. From an international perspective, Germany's and Italy's 'inferior' position after the war only improved as a result of membership in NATO. Consequently, PCI demands for a neutral foreign policy could only but remain unrealistic. Similar to those of the SPD prior to June 1960, the PCI's proposals did not acknowledge the fact that Italy's government (and as such the other political forces in the country) had little to gain from and thus no interest in promoting a neutral foreign policy. Adherence to the West and its military alliance were beneficial above all to the DC, which had since 1947/48 enjoyed US benevolence. It was crucial in maintaining DC hegemony in a bipolar national system divided along Cold War lines. Both main political actors, the PCI and DC, had developed with the emergence of the Cold War international (and ideological) bonds of loyalty. These international loyalties left both PCI and DC in a position of dependence and limited Italy's sovereignty as a state.[221]

The Italian political system, until 1963 ideologically divided into two camps, nurtured the fighting of a 'national Cold War'.[222] Similar was the rationale of some of the smaller left-wing or centrist parties in Italy, whose parliamentary survival was centred around and secured via a participation in the many DC-led coalitions. Foreign policy ambivalence and controversial positions towards NATO were simply not 'affordable'. Even if, as it is assumed, rearmament or military deterrence was difficult to accept for many of them, equidistance in the Cold War was simply not an option. Parliamentary survival had its price to pay.

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[221] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 24.

[222] Particular reference is made to 1963, when the PSI was included in the governing coalition with the DC. This was crucial in altering the balance of forces as the PSI's inclusion in the DC-led bloc theoretically put an end to the bipolarity of the Italian domestic system. In practice, the PCI was henceforth ever more firmly isolated from the governmental area by referring to its democratic illegitimacy. The DC, above all, wanted to ally with the Socialists in order to divide the Left.

At the same time, the PCI's potential for causing significant, wider changes in the world communist movement and in European détente were rather minimal. This was forcefully realised after the events of 1968. Though not marking a crisis of détente in terms of a deterioration of East-West relations, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 had a drastic impact on the PCI's concept of internationalism. It was a crisis of the global communist movement and had crushed all hopes of former concepts of polycentrism within the system, or the realisation of diverse strands of socialism. For the first time, the severe restrictions and limitations within the 'other' camp were realised. The influence this ultimately had on the PCI's own vision of détente and the bloc confrontation should not be underestimated. The Soviet invasion of CSSR provoked the question of whether détente, in the Soviet conception of it, was beneficial to socialist transformation in the West. In the long-term, it challenged and subsequently altered the PCI's previously held position that US imperialism was solely held responsible for a deterioration of East-West relations.

It is difficult to imagine how a neutral (Italian or German) national foreign policy could have dynamically contributed to détente, let alone have a say in world affairs. Italy and Germany had no choice but to align with the West. This was acknowledged by the SPD in 1960, and by the PCI more than a decade later. Given the nature of the bipolar system, we can also understand how some operational initiatives that would aim toward an autonomous foreign policy for Europe from that of the USA, would be looked upon with suspicion. Additionally, the PCI, whilst advocating an Italian foreign policy based on active neutrality, was itself not and could not have been neutral in the Cold War. Though reiterating the need to dissolve both blocs, the PCI's foreign policy was closely linked with Soviet positions until the 1970s.

4.) SPD and PCI perspectives on East-West détente in the 1960s

The Federal Republic, with its close ties with the US and NATO, its geographic vulnerability, its concern for the division of Germany and its Ost- and Deutschlandpolitik, had been torn between dependency on both East and West. Dependence on the West entailed the need for military protection and European integration; and on the East for improved relations with the GDR, Soviet constructiveness on the German question and increasing German trade with the Eastern bloc. Relations with the East had been largely consolidated by the beginning of the 1970s as a result of the treaties envisaged in Ostpolitik. In the mid to late 1970s, Chancellor Schmidt continuously argued that support for Ostpolitik could not entail a lessened commitment to an adequate defence capability via NATO, the US nuclear shield and an East-West military balance. The passing over of office from Brandt to Schmidt in 1974 went hand in hand with changes in style and emphasis towards securing European détente.

In the 1960s, the PCI had envisaged a zone of disengagement from Cold War politics in Europe, which involved the gradual 'phasing out of the two power blocs' – a proposal which could be implemented through controlled disarmament, agreements of nuclear control, recognition of the two Germanies and a withdrawal of all foreign bases in Italy and Western Europe.[223] This process of détente would facilitate the reacquisition of Italian autonomy and subsequently no longer render a PCI entry in government impossible. Most profoundly, the PCI's dynamic conception of détente had been almost diametrically reverse to the Soviet concept of peaceful coexistence. Contend with securing the present status quo, the Soviet Union – more so since the experiment of Czech reformism – had been concerned with crushing discontent within and consolidating its own bloc. The PCI wished to overcome the blocs and hence promoted, since 1968, a different internationalism which became increasingly

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[223] See, for instance, PCI (ed.), 'Tesi del XII Congresso Nazionale 1969', in *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano IV 1964-1975*, p. 263.

incompatible with Moscow's foreign policies, or reversely, Soviet internationalism provided insurmountable obstacles to the PCI's *via italiana al socialismo*.

5.) SPD, PCI and the idea of a collective European security system

'Détente' often exclusively refers to a relaxation of (military) tensions towards a relation of peaceful coexistence of the Cold War adversaries. It is often understood as mere continuation of the Cold War by different means rather than as a break with it.[224] It was thus characterised by a declared willingness on behalf of the superpowers to avoid global nuclear conflict and a deterioration of military escalation and only secondarily, by an increase of commercial, economic and cultural ties across the Iron Curtain. The kind of détente favoured by Soviet leaders was based on the consolidation of the political and military blocs and hegemony from above, a so-called 'static détente' in the PCI's definition.[225] Analysed from this perspective, both SPD and PCI, though wholeheartedly embracing the very idea of East-West détente, had little in common with the superpower conception of the term. Their concept of détente went well beyond a mere, albeit peaceful, coexistence of the two military camps. In many ways, their conceptions of détente and ideas were ahead of their time. Both parties did not simply contend with the existence of the two blocs but aimed at a dynamic process of détente leading ultimately towards the dissolution of the blocs. Somewhat oversimplifying the PCI thus defied the Soviet concept of peaceful coexistence based on the consolidation of the status quo by referring to the idea of peaceful coexistence as ultimately as means to eliminate the blocs which were dividing Europe. Both SPD and PCI converged towards that end. It is worth noting that the SPD's rhetoric on the subject were a little misleading. The SPD accepted the status quo, but not the Soviet vision of détente from above, and only to the extent that the peaceful coexistence of the blocs was necessary as a sort of interim stage leading to the eventual disintegration of both. The SPD's conception was premised on continuation of the

[224] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 37.
[225] Ibid., p. 365.

rival blocs with détente occurring between them, but its end logic was nevertheless the transformation if not the disintegration of Soviet-style communism, even if nobody could conceive this happening in the short-term, most certainly it was not believed by the SPD to occur in the immediate future.[226]

SPD and PCI held convergent conceptions of détente. It was precisely the rigidity of the bloc system which both SPD and PCI so arduously wished to overcome. This end goal was shared by both. The operational strategy towards that end diverged until 1974.

A mutual interest in overcoming the Cold War divisions in Europe led both SPD and PCI to raise the idea of a collective European security system. The fundamental difference was that the PCI intended a phasing out of both blocs in favour of such a system which had categorically excluded the possibility of Italy's adherence to a certain military bloc until 1974. This is remarkably similar to the SPD's concept as envisaged until the end of the 1950s.[227] From 1960 onwards, the SPD, however, saw the military Alliance as a guarantor for Western Europe's (and West Germany's safety) until it was dissolved in favour of a more comprehensive pan-European security system.[228]

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[226] Irwin M. Wall, 'The United States and two Ostpolitiks. De Gaulle and Brandt', in Wilfried Loth (ed.), *The making of détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75*, p. 134.

[227] The SPD's concept of a collective European security system was developed around 1952 in light over the EDC debate. This system would incorporate a reunited Germany on the basis of equal rights. The inclusion of the separate German states in two opposing military blocs would render the Cold War inevitable. See 'Aktionsprogramm der SPD', decided upon at the 1952 Party Congress in Dortmund and extended at the 1954 Berlin Congress, re-printed in Udo F. Löwke, *Für den Fall, dass...SPD und Wehrfrage 1949-1955*, pp. 252-253. This idea was elaborated upon in 1953. In a parliamentary debate over the EDC treaty, Erich Ollenhauer declared that this security system would have to be implemented on the widest possible basis, including Britain, Denmark and Norway. Its relation with the Atlantic system would still have to be defined. Speech Erich Ollenhauer, 19 March 1953, re-printed in ibid., pp. 251-252. See also the resolutions of the 1956 Party Congress and the 1957 elections campaign programme of the SPD re-printed in Flechtheim (ed.), *Dokumente zur parteipolitischen Entwicklung in Deutschland seit 1945*, pp. 134-148.

[228] SPD (ed.), *SPD Jahrbuch 1966/67*, p. 62; SPD's resolutions at the 1968 Party Congress held in Nuremburg, in SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1968/1969*, p. 339. See also AdSD, WBA, Außenminister 1966-1969, Allgemeine Korrespondenz, Mappe 4.

The demand for Germany's inclusion in NATO did not exclude the call for a collective European security system, or inversely, adherence to the Western Alliance was, according to the SPD, compatible with the end goal of a European peace order, whose central component was a collective system of European security.[229] This idea had been promoted by the SPD in the 1950s and 1960s and less overtly and ardently raised in the 1970s. In almost all foreign policy statements, the PCI stressed the need for the dissolution of both political military blocs, proposing a policy of 'active neutrality' for Italy involving a withdrawal from NATO and the establishment of a collective all-European security system,[230] which would render both military pacts obsolete.[231] This demand went had in hand with that for a European security conference. Such a conference would play an enormous role in overcoming the existing military blocs, and would establish the framework for a peaceful, democratic and independent Europe – a Europe which was not subject to external interference in national affairs (referring to Soviet and US interference alike).[232]

One has to distinguish between those in the SPD who saw the FRG's safety permanently secured only by the American military shield (Helmut Schmidt) and those who were more critical about the dual foreign policy concept of NATO-membership as a precondition for reunification (Egon Bahr).[233] Brandt and his foreign policy advisor, Egon Bahr, never questioned Germany's membership to NATO, however, only until a 'better mechanism was

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[229] Interview with Brandt, *Der Spiegel*, 9 September 1968, re-printed in W. Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Ein Volk der guten Nachbarn. Außen- und Deutschlandpolitik 1966-1974* (Bonn, Berlin: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 2005), pp. 184.

[230] For example, Luigi Longo, 'Report to the Central Committee', 20 October 1965, in *Foreign Bulletin of the PCI* (subsequently *Foreign Bulletin*) (October-December 1965), p. 15. See also G. Napolitano, 'Report to the Central Committee and Central Commission of Control', *Foreign Bulletin* (July-August 1967), p. 10.

[231] *Rinascita*, Alessandro Natta, 'Oltre il Patto atlantico', 1 September 1967, p. 2.

[232] Agostino Novella, 'Report to the Foreign Policy Commission of the Central Committee', in *Foreign Bulletin* (March-June 1973), p. 64.

[233] Andreas Vogtmeier, *Egon Bahr und die deutsche Frage* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 1996), pp. 353-354.

found to replace NATO in the process of German reunification'.[234] The end goal was to overcome the division of Europe and the dissolution of both military blocs.[235] Until then, the Atlantic Alliance was the sine qua non for Germany's security.[236] Schmidt's thinking, on the other hand, was shaped by the belief in a necessary military balance between the Western military Alliance and the Warsaw Pact.[237] Schmidt argued that détente (and negotiations with the East) were only possible from the basis of military parity in order not to render either power vulnerable to political blackmail. In the late 1970s Schmidt increasingly pursued his own, distinctive security policy firmly based on nuclear deterrence through the NATO alliance and the classical perception of the balance of power. These differences of perception in security and military thinking, as for example with regard to the missile debate in Europe, were more than minimal and led to fierce internal debates. As we will examine subsequently, once the PCI had accepted NATO as the international framework within which the Italian road to socialism could be accomplished, this did not dismiss the long-term aim of overcoming the blocs in general and their replacement by a more suitable system through which European détente could be maintained.[238] Many within the SPD also considered NATO as an interim international framework, which would eventually be replaced by a more 'suitable mechanism'.[239]

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[234] 'Kundgebungen und Entschließungen des Nürnberger Parteitages 1968', in SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1968/69*, p. 339. See also Brandt's article in *Außenpolitik*, August 1967, re-printed in W. Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Ein Volk der guten Nachbarn. Außen- und Deutschlandpolitik 1966-1974*, pp. 130-137.

[235] It has often been stressed that the Atlantic Alliance was necessary until a functioning system of European security was established, in AdSD, WBA, Außenminister 1966-1969, Allgemeine Korrespondenz, Mappe 9. This was reiterated by Brandt in the aftermath of the Czech events of August 1968, in 'SPD Pressemitteilungen und Informationen', No. 388, 22 August 1968, in AdSD, WBA, Publikationen 1968, Mappe 283.

[236] Willy Brandt, 'Die Entscheidung des Jahres', in *Die neue Gesellschaft*, No. 2 (March/April 1965), p. 605.

[237] Schmidt's speech to the 1966 Party Congress of the SPD, extract re-printed in Boris Meissner (ed.), *Die deutsche Ostpolitik 1961-1970. Kontinuität und Wandel. Dokumentation* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1970), p. 132.

[238] See, for example, Bracke who argued that once NATO was accepted by the PCI the aim of 'overcoming the blocs' through European dynamic détente was abandoned, in *Which Socialism*, p. 331.

[239] Horst Ehmke (ed.), *Perspektiven Sozialdemokratischer Politik im Übergang zu den siebziger Jahren* (Bonn: Rowohlt, 1969), p. 19.

6.) The PCI and NATO: Towards foreign policy revisionism, 1969-1974

For the PCI, foreign policy has always played a determining role, not least because of the necessity of presenting itself as a party with an independent, autonomous and Western identity. Due to Italy's heterogeneous political scenery (divided along Cold War lines), the PCI had faced the dual challenge of presenting itself as a credible national force and reliable political player, genuinely independent from Moscow's directives, whilst maintaining a distinguished, authentic image in comparison with the other parties of the Italian Left. The PCI, as a communist party, thus found itself constrained by two loyalties which compelled the party to probe the themes of foreign policy and to make the interests of its activists cluster around them. In light of the Cold War, the PCI was – by its internal and international opponents alike – seen as functioning solely as a pawn in the chess game of another player in international politics. It was consequently doomed to parliamentary opposition in a bipolar system in spite of its enormous and unprecedented political weight (relative to other Western European communist parties) on a national level.

The party's domestic strategy of the historic compromise – a governmental alliance with the other leading forces of the country as launched in October 1973 – drastically affected and altered the party's military and security policies. As discussed above, transformations in the party's relations with the Soviet Union and the global communist movement preceded these changes and were directly linked to the invasion of 1968. Even earlier (in 1962), the PCI had undertaken a major shift in terms of its European strategy and position on Western European economic integration. The potential for a normalisation of East-West relations stimulated and made possible any change of PCI policies towards the Atlantic Alliance and conceptions of European détente.

6.1) The renewal of the Atlantic Pact

While the 1960s were generally considered as the beginning of détente, the more visible effects of it in terms of superpower agreements of disarmament and the SPD's Ostpolitik as an integral part of détente in Europe occurred only after 1968. The PCI not only euphorically endorsed and welcomed détente, but was proud to have had an active share in at least its services of 'mediator' for Brandt's Ostpolitik in 1967/68. In its wake, the PCI began in the early 1970s to slowly rethink and revise some of its earlier dogmatic positions on the Atlantic Alliance. Changes in tone (less outspoken intransigent opposition) led some observers to the somewhat premature conclusion that first signs of a revision regarding the Atlantic Pact were noticeable already before the 20-year term of the North Atlantic Treaty.[240] However, official communist policy remained 'NATO out of Italy, Italy out of NATO'. Within the party, matters were different. Any security and military policy U-turn could only occur gradually. The position on NATO was rather widely discussed within the leading circles of the party and hence more carefully prepared for (compared with the SPD's abrupt shift in June 1960). The PCI's policy shift and changed perception on NATO had to take place progressively. Internal resistance to years of opposition to the Alliance had to be overcome. For more than twenty years, the PCI had opposed NATO and Italy's membership in the Alliance. The Vietnam War, in the eyes of not only the PCI's militants but other leading circles as well, had been the most forceful manifestation of aggressive American imperialism[241] – and was still being fought and had produced strong anti-US sentiments not exclusive to communist parties (these feelings were also widespread amongst the SPD and its young socialist group). The internal organisational structure of a communist party (a top to bottom decision-making process) of course generates more scope for the decision making circles to carry out certain policies or

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[240] Ronzitti, 'Italian Political Parties', p. 15.

[241] Antonio Rubbi, *Il Mondo di Berlinguer* (Roma: Napoleone, 1994), p. 23; *Rinascita*, Romano Ledda, 'Ai confini della Cina' (editorial), 19 February 1971, pp. 1-2; *Rinascita*, Alessandro Natta, 'Il legame che soffoca' (editorial), 26 February 1971, p. 2.

impose specific operational measures. Nonetheless, years of internal opposition had to be overcome. In the midst of the Vietnam War this process was slowly initiated.

Thus, prior to 1969 (renewal of the NATO treaty), the issue was discussed in closed leading circles. Officially though, the treaty's renewal was opposed.[242] Public campaigns against NATO (demonstrations in Rome etc) were supported by the PCI, but the lack of initiative to launch massive propaganda campaigns was illustrative of the changes taken place inside the party.[243] Most probably intended as conciliation towards the party's activists, Sergio Segre had in 1967 attempted to pave the way for a gradual reversal by suggesting that NATO's character itself had changed. Whereas it had been the principal instrument of American imperialist policies after the Second World War, it (by 1967) no longer corresponded fully to American interests.[244] Slowly, formerly unperceived virtues were attributed to the Atlantic Pact.

6.2) From active neutrality to NATO

At the XII Party Congress, PCI secretary-general Luigi Longo still called on the validity of the old slogan 'NATO out of Italy, Italy out of NATO', whilst he simultaneously emphasised that the PCI's goal was 'not the dissolution of the Western bloc in favour of the consolidation of the Eastern bloc, but the dissolution of both, in favour of a new European settlement'.[245] Yet, in spite of all terminological nuances which come to bear in the distinction of 'bloc withdrawal' but not in 'favour of one or the other bloc', the PCI, at that stage, had not freed its internationalism from all relicts of the obligatory 'choice of sides'. As far as the PCI's

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[242] Napolitano's Report at the Central Committee and the Central Commission of Control, *Foreign Bulletin* (July-August 1967), p. 10.

[243] In an article in *Rinascita*, Renato Sandri stressed that the PCI had promoted demonstrations against NATO in Rome; the campaign slogan was entitled 'Basi NATO: gli aggressori sono tra noi – Fuori la NATO dall'Italia', see *Rinascita*, Renato Sandri, 'Lotta anti NATO e sicurezza europea', 5 June 1970, p. 4.

[244] *Rinascita*, Sergio Segre, 'Guerre locali e strategia della coesistenza', 7 July 1967, p. 4.

[245] Longo, XII National Congress of the PCI, 1969 in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano, IV 1964-1975*, p. 169.

international adversaries were concerned, this rather limited development with regards to the Atlantic Pact implied that in the prevailing consciousness of the West, communist parties, and as such the PCI, were still perceived as ill-defined monoliths. This, at least, remained the picture for the outside observer.

In 1972 Berlinguer declared that the problem may no longer be reduced to a simplistic call in favour or against the Western military pact. At the beginning of 1973, whilst the official position was still valid, it became more thoroughly and critically debated in closed circles of the party. Though still rather isolated, Longo had stressed during a reunion of the party's executive committee that 'Today, remaining inside the Atlantic Pact or not is no longer the problem of debate. We should underline staying in the Alliance (...) as this is necessary if we wish to improve our relations with other (political) forces'.[246] Hence, if the PCI hoped to enter government, acceptance of Italy's military and security obligations was the price to pay. This was realised and previous demands seemed more outdated and unrealistic than ever. Similar to the debates within the SPD's parliamentary faction and executive in the spring of 1960, Longo's position was not as yet representative of official party thinking. During the same meeting, Bufalini stressed that 'it would not be realistic and rather unattainable to maintain "Italy out of NATO, Soviet Union out of Prague", because ultimately espoused by us, this would lead to anti-Soviet postures'.[247]

For political parties, foreign policy is frequently a tool of domestic politics. Policy changes are often not motivated by ideological re-evaluations but inspired by pure pragmatism. As the January / February 1973 meeting of the PCI's Direzione showed, this was undoubtedly valid for the Italian Communists' move to accepting Italy's military obligations. For the PCI, the

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[246] See, for example, Luigi Longo's intervention at the meeting of the PCI's Direzione, 31 January/1 February 1973, in APC, Direzione 041.
[247] Bufalini's intervention at the meeting of the PCI's Direzione in ibid.

debate was above all a means to ascertain its many opponents that it was acting primarily as a national party and only secondarily as an integrated component of the international communist movement. As the strategy of approaching the governmental area was adjudged determinant, it was obligatory to first 'soften' the party's anti-Atlanticism and ideologically motivated rejection of NATO – given that Atlantic loyalty was being considered one of the requisite hinges of Italian foreign policy (again bearing in mind that the PSI had already had 'to pay the price' in order to enter government in 1963).

Avoiding to position itself unequivocally, the PCI, between 1969 and 1974, did so by parting with the self-imposed dictate to make a choice in the Cold War confrontation, by dismissing the hitherto valid notion of 'choice of side' in international politics. This involved the elaboration of a détente conception exclusive to the PCI and unique amongst Western European communist parties. This took the form of slogans such a 'promoting a foreign policy that was neither anti-Soviet nor anti-American'.[248] By subjecting its international policies and activities almost exclusively to the priority of détente, the party, at that stage, also avoided making an unambiguous 'choice of side'.

7.) The PCI and the 'umbrella NATO'

At the December 1974 meeting of the Central Committee, Berlinguer eventually paved the way for the policy U-turn by declaring that the PCI should abandon the slogan 'Italy out of NATO, NATO out of Italy'.[249] By 1975, the PCI's position vis-à-vis the Atlantic Pact was fully and unambiguously reversed. The Italian Communists no longer questioned Italy's

[248] Novella, 'Report to the Foreign Policy Commission of the Central Committee', p. 68.
[249] Central committee meeting of the PCI, 10-12 December 1974, as referred to by Rubbi, *Il Mondo*, p. 45.

obligations in the Alliance.[250] The PCI had come to realise that if Italy withdrew from NATO unilaterally, this would in fact jeopardize European détente, which the party had so euphorically endorsed. In 1976 Sergio Segre declared that 'one of the things that has made détente possible was the attainment of a military strategic equilibrium and that further progress can be made in détente only to the extent it did not produce unilateral disadvantages for one or the other side (...)'.[251] In essence, the PCI argued the following: If Italy unilaterally withdrew from NATO, this would change the international balance of power between the two blocs and jeopardise détente and cooperation since the two are founded on that very balance. This would run counter PCI interests. Whereas in 1970 Berlinguer had argued that, 'belonging to the Atlantic Pact not only did not guarantee Italy's security, it also severely limited the country's independence in search for an autonomous international initiative'[252], the reverse was argued in 1976. The PCI's operational concept of détente had drastically altered and been attuned to the national and international geopolitical realities. By 1976 détente was perceived as a process which could only be maintained without changing the strategic equilibrium (albeit at the lowest possible military level) between Washington and Moscow.[253] This did not imply that the strategic goal of bloc dissolution was renounced or permanently abandoned in favour of NATO as the new international framework. Both SPD and PCI had come to realise that the Western military alliance was a given fact, would in any case exist for an indefinite period of time (much as the Cold War in general) and that, if it could not be withdrawn from, it could at least be used so as to function advantageously to the national interests and

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[250] Enrico Berlinguer, 'Intesa e lotta di tutte le forze democratiche e popolari per la salvezza e la rinascita dell'Italia', in *XIV Congresso*, 18-23 Marzo 1975, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano, IV 1964-1975*, p. 382. See also Enrico Berlinguer 'Le peculiarità e l'autonomia del PCI', originally from an interview with *Time magazine*, 24 June 1975, re-printed in Enrico Berlinguer, *La politica internazionale dei comunisti italiani 1975-1976*, Antonio Tatò (ed.) (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1976), p. 70.

[251] Sergio Segre, 'The "Communist Question" in Italy', *Foreign Affairs*, No. 4 (1976), p. 699.

[252] Enrico Berlinguer, Speech in Parliament, 11 August 1970, in E. Berlinguer, *Discorsi parlamentari (1968-1984)*, Maria Luisa Righi (ed.) (Roma: Camera dei Deputati, 2001), p. 42.

[253] Enrico Berlinguer, 'La diversità sostanziale della via al socialismo dell'occidente europeo', originally in 'Dall'intervento al CC', 29 October 1975, re-printed in Enrico Berlinguer, *La politica internazionale dei comunisti italiani 1975-1976*, pp. 92-93.

ambitions of the two parties. Neither party considered NATO as the most suitable international framework but as the most realistic and accepted it as an 'interim solution' to a more comprehensive all-European peace and security order.

Previously it was held that only by overcoming the 'logic of the blocs' – so the PCI's calculation – stood the party, if at all, with a feasible chance in realising its 'via italiana al socialismo'. Subsequently it was argued by the PCI that in fact only by accepting and not altering the logic of the blocs could it become a legitimate partner in a coalition government. The international geopolitical realities had disfavoured previous outdated demands. The new concept discarded the rejection of NATO and explained this move with the old and lasting interest in the process of détente which, to the PCI, was the precondition for social and political change in Italy in as much as the national projection of international bipolarism prevented the proper functioning of the rules of representative democracy and parliamentary change of government.

The PCI's support for Italy's security and military obligations in the form of NATO was thus exclusively directed at domestic purposes. The policy reversal cannot be understood without the domestic strategy as envisaged in the historic compromise. Yet, it also stemmed from the realisation that the party's previous demand of unilateral dissolution of both blocs had become entirely unrealistic. This had been declared occasionally by the leadership but was most plausibly directed at the PCI's militants and to reconcile inner-party opponents.

The question of government participation forced the PCI into making clear that the future Italy would not be aligned with the communist bloc, that Italy's adherence to the West (and NATO) would not be put into question and that a PCI participation in government would not alter the military status quo in the Mediterranean. As a result, PCI leader Berlinguer went a step further in declaring, on the eve of Italy's national elections in June 1976 in a much

quoted interview with Giampaolo Pansa from the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*, that 'he in fact felt safer on this side and under NATO's protection'.[254] The timing of Berlinguer's public reassurance of the party's acceptance of NATO (in conjunction with Italy's national elections) was well chosen: it had the function of demonstrating and reassuring the West that the PCI was a national, democratic force that actively sought to contribute to the process of East-West détente and hence could be fully trusted as a partner in government. The novelty in Berlinguer's declaration was not so much that he no longer questioned Italy's membership in NATO, but that he felt 'safer on this side'.[255] By reassuring that the party too felt safer in the West and under the 'umbrella NATO', the PCI wished to reassure the US and its international opponents in the West of its democratic credentials, and that it had entered a new phase of independency and autonomy from the Soviet Union. This would, so it was hoped, render the historic compromise at home more viable. If the PCI did not wish to await the end of East-West hostilities (and as such the end of the Cold War itself), it needed to find a domestic and international strategy that would allow the party to move more freely (towards a participation in government) within the confines of the existing power bloc confrontation. Thus, the most fundamental side to Berlinguer's statement was that the PCI aimed to reassure Italy's Western European neighbours and the United States of its democratic reliability and that - in the event of Communist participation in government - this would not in the slightest alter Italy's military and security commitments.

This re-orientation marked the closest concurrence between the domestic policy of the PCI on the one hand and its international orientation thus far. It was intended to reconcile the 'Italian way to socialism' with the international course, which in the correspondence with the 'choice of sides' had prevailed since the onset of the Cold War. European détente of the 1970s

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[254] *Corriere della Sera*, Enrico Berlinguer, 'Il PCI e la NATO', Interview with Giampaolo Pansa, 15 June 1976, re-printed in E. Berlinguer, *La politica internazionale dei comunisti italiani 1975-1976*, p. 7.
[255] Ibid.

provided the necessary international setting for the PCI to reverse its previous lines as a relaxation of tension did not force the PCI to align with either side. This of course also implied that the PCI's strategy was strongly dependent on the process of European détente.

On the other hand, it allowed the party to launch a new image and to be at the forefront of contributing to an enduring détente between the East and West. Although the Czechoslovakian events of 1968 well preceded the PCI's policy reappraisal, the military suppression of the Czechoslovak reform course - an expression of staunchest Soviet bloc policy - had shown the PCI that Soviet foreign policy and intervention had also been obstacles for an Italian path to socialism. Thus, within the hitherto chosen side, there had been severe impediments to communist advances in Italy.

8.) Reactions in the West

The precise and well-calculated timing of Berlinguer's remarks unsurprisingly and unavoidably rendered them subject to attacks and accusations of insincerity and as being merely tactically motivated moves. Contrary to Berlinguer's intentions, his reassurances were not only half-believed (after all, the PCI was still a communist party) but the West felt even more threatened by the PCI's policy reversal on NATO in June 1976.

To what extent Berlinguer had the party's militants behind him is difficult to ascertain. Barbagallo, for instance, stressed that Berlinguer's move had not been welcomed by many in the PCI, precisely because of the increasing distance from Moscow which would emerge from it.[256] The fact that large parts of the party's activists or its electorate allegedly did not agree with the directorate's policy changes contributed to Western fears and suspicions about the PCI. To many Western observers, one of the key questions to address was how a party with such a distinctly radical background could manage to become acceptable for those within

[256] Francesco Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer* (Roma: Carocci Editore, 2006), p. 266.

Italian society who did not aim at radical changes, without losing at the same time large parts of its rank and file? Since according to Western observers, significant parts of the PCI's support derived from pro-Soviet militants, the PCI's moderation and reassurances amounted to mere rhetorical statements and tactic manoeuvres. Viewed from this perspective, it is not entirely surprising that the PCI's foreign policy statements generated serious concern amongst Western European and American leaders. From an American and Soviet perspective, it is comprehensible why a strong and independent Western European communist party presented a threat. At the end of 1975, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Kissinger's right-hand man, declared at a meeting of American ambassadors in Europe that 'a communism together with liberty is a hypothesis that frightens both Washington and Moscow alike'.[257] Moscow feared the spill-over effect on the communist regimes in the East and the challenges a Western unorthodox type of communism would involve.

Western fears must of course be seen in light of the developing Eurocommunist phenomena – which, by the mid-1970s had gained momentum – and the alleged dangers which the remarkable national mass consensus and electoral success of the largest Western European communist party provided for the West. Europe was haunted by it again – the ghost of communism. As we will analyse later, media and press coverage nurtured the developing 'hysteria'. Western Europe certainly would have preferred smaller, less successful (in electoral terms), more intransigent, Soviet-loyal communist parties which were not more than shapeless monoliths. Electorally strong communist parties which, above all, *even declared* their acceptance of the values of parliamentary democracy, pluralism and the Atlantic Alliance, could not but raise great suspicion in the West. The Italian case is illustrative of the fears and dangers that were conjured up in the West.

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[257] Francesco Barbagallo, 'Enrico Berlinguer, il Compromesso Storico e l'Alternative Democratica', *Studi Storici*, October-December 2004 (Roma: Carocci Editore, 2005), p. 942.

The Italian election campaign of 1976, the rising success of the PCI (since the 1975 regional elections of definite Western concern) and the eventuality of a PCI entry in government as a result of the realisation of the historic compromise, were widely discussed and thoroughly covered by the German press since March 1976.[258] Diametrically reverse to the SPD's (as well as the PSI's) move to Atlanticism, the PCI's acceptance of NATO was considered to be a tactic measure and little credibility was given to it, at least from the perspective of the party's international adversaries.[259] The 'precipitated' decision on the eve of the Italian national elections in June 1976 only further proved in the eyes of many Western observers that Berlinguer's reassurance was half-hearted. West German press - conservative and left-wing alike - paid an enormous amount of attention to Italian domestic politics between March and July 1976, with particular consideration to the development of the PCI.

Much as the PCI hoped to make a participation in government acceptable to the US via NATO, the latter strongly opposed a PCI government entry in the 1970s. Fine distinctions in tone were, however, noticeable between the Ford and the Carter administrations. While the Carter administration did not seem to have been willing to intervene militarily, it did maintain a strategy of keeping the PCI out of government through far-reaching political and economic support of the DC.[260] The Puerto Rico economic summit of June 1976 was seen as the most salient expression of Western interventionism thus far.

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[258] The Italian political situation and the development of the PCI were subject to wide press coverage in Germany. See, for example, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ)*, *Die Welt*, *Münchener Merkur*, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, *Vorwärts* between March and July 1976.

[259] Henry Kissinger argued that 'support of NATO (by the PCI) as expressed is explicitly tactical, and rests upon a distortion of détente' and he came to the somewhat simplistic conclusion asking 'how could Leninist parties dedicate themselves with any conviction to a military alliance whose primary purpose was and remains to counter Soviet power?', in H. Kissinger, 'Communist Parties in Western Europe: Challenge to the West', in Austin Ranney and Giovanni Sartori (eds), *Eurocommunism: The Italian Case* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1978), p. 191.

[260] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 332. See also Andreas Pott and Michael Strübel who argued that though the Carter administration opposed PCI governmental participation in principle, it emphasised a policy of non-interference in internal affairs of other states, in 'Eurokommunismus aus der Sicht der NATO', in Dieter S. Lutz (ed.), *Eurokommunismus und NATO* (Bonn: Osang, 1979), p. 132.

9.) PCI and SPD relations with the United States and the war in Vietnam

The PCI's policy reassessment towards NATO was somewhat necessarily intertwined with a general interest in improved relations with the United States. In the immediate post-war period until the beginning of the 1970s, insofar as it referred to the Cold War situation, anti-imperialism was linked to anti-Americanism. It was also linked to the struggles for liberation in the Third World and to American interventionism. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Soviet-aligned communist world had also identified with the decolonisation and the national liberation movements. Anti-Americanism was an integral part of communist ideology; since the 1960s it was strongly linked to US global policy and the escalation of the Vietnam War, and as far as the PCI was concerned, only secondarily with the cultural and socio-economic model it represented. With the beginning of the 1970s, anti-Americanism as a symbol and expression of communist internationalism decreased sharply in PCI thinking. In many ways imperialism, when referring to the Third World, became a considerably stronger and an increasingly important element of the party's internationalism.[261]

In 1973 the PCI leadership initiated contacts with the United States.[262] In light of these relations with the United States, the PCI began to stress that these were not motivated by anti-Americanism and that the party was pursuing a policy for Italy and Europe that was 'neither anti-American, nor anti-Soviet', but instead held friendly relations with both.[263] Throughout 1975/1976 the formula of a foreign policy that was 'neither anti-US nor anti-Soviet' was reiterated whenever possible.[264] This formerly anti-Imperialist, pro-Soviet foreign policy of the PCI developed into an in principle equidistant, but in practice critical yet benevolent pro-American foreign policy. Equidistance could of course only be maintained in periods of East-

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[261] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 25.
[262] Ibid., p. 331.
[263] Berlinguer, 'L'Italia, il PCI e gli Stati Uniti', re-printed in Berlinguer, *La politica internazionale dei comunisti italiani 1975-1976*, p. 63.
[264] Ibid.

West détente. Whenever Cold War hostilities came to the fore again, this position could not be upheld and the party ran the risk of losing credibility.

The SPD had generally been more 'liberal' to attack American (foreign) policies from within the parliamentary opposition. Ever since the end of the 1950s, though still in opposition, the SPD was interested in closer relations with the United States, primarily because compatibility with US foreign policy was a prerequisite to gain trust amongst the West German population.[265] The particularly good relation between Brandt and Kennedy was only an expression of this. Though inner-personal relations are by no means exclusively responsible for party or state relations, they often automatically influence those. This had been most noticeably the case between Schmidt and Ford and later Carter.

The Vietnam War and the accompanying shift in the relationship between Western Europe and the United States unleashed the most significant anti-US movement – against the Vietnamese War – seen in Europe thus far. Opposition to US 'imperialism' was not exclusive to left-wing groups but common to large sections of the West German public. The SPD's Ostpolitik had coincided with US involvement in the Vietnam War. This severely restricted the Social Democrats' willingness to attack American foreign policies. The involvement in the Vietnam War had detached the Americans from previous engagements in Western Europe and provided the SPD with more leverage to pursue an independent Eastern policy and to open dialogue with Eastern nations. Hence, even if the conflict in Vietnam affected US-German diplomacy, open criticism of the US engagement in the war was detained. Nonetheless, this had failed to silence critical voices within the SPD. On the contrary, it had

[265] See also Edwin Czerwick, *Oppositionstheorien und Außenpolitik. Eine Analyse sozialdemokratischer Deutschlandpolitik 1955-1966* (Königstein/Ts.: Anton Hain, 1981), p. 98.

become an explosive issue amongst inner-party circles.[266] The party leadership and Brandt were frequently attacked for being too conciliatory towards US foreign policy, avoiding any clear cut criticism about American involvement in Vietnam.[267] Prominent SPD members such as Karsten Voigt criticised the SPD's weak and hesitant disapproval of the American imperialist war in Vietnam.[268] A number of SPD regional and sub-regional committees condemned US bombing of North Vietnam. These committees pressed the federal government in Bonn to demand an unconditional and immediate end of all American bombardments.[269]

The party leadership was itself torn in the attempt to channel the widespread anti-Americanism amongst the SPD's base (as well as amongst West Germans) in order not to jeopardise US-German relations. Due to the party's Ostpolitik, this was of primary concern. Willy Brandt became increasingly trapped in his dual function as foreign minister (and in this role promoting close ties with the US and the Alliance) as well as in his role as SPD leader (reconciling diplomacy with demands from the SPD's rank and file). The diverse perception of the Vietnam War within the SPD had crystallised in the course of 1967, when the American military action against North Vietnam escalated into a war bombardment which had caused severe casualties amongst the population.[270]

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[266] See also Klaus Schönhoven, *Wendejahre. Die Sozialdemokratie in der Zeit der Großen Koalition 1966-1969* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2004), p. 421.

[267] *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 'SPD-Parteitag kritisierte Bundeskanzler Willy Brandt', 20 February 1973, re-printed in AdSD, 2/BTFG001977; see also *Vorwärts*, 'Endlich Schluss in Vietnam', 18 January 1973, p. 1.

[268] See speech by K. Voigt, in SPD (ed.), *Außerordentlicher Parteitag der SPD. Protokoll der Verhandlungen*, 12/13 October 1972, Dortmund, Bonn, p. 147.

[269] 'SPD-Gliederungen verurteilen US-Bombenterror', AdSD, 2/BTFG001977.

[270] Schönhoven, *Wendejahre*, p. 421.

Chapter 4

SPD and PCI policies towards European integration

1. Italy, Germany and the context of European economic integration

In the 1960s, Western Europe's remarkable post-war economic expansion continued to rise. It marked a period of high growth rates, booming exports, minimal unemployment and controllable inflation – in sum, an economic performance that did much to cement in the minds of Western European policy makers and citizens an equation between integration and economic success.[271] Economic stability and growth was in large part attributed to Western European economic integration (from ECSC to EEC).[272] In Italy, the so-called 'economic miracle' dates back to the years from 1958 to 1963 which, without doubt, represented a unique and exceptional phase of Italian economic history. In those years, Italy transformed its economy from a rural to an industrialised one, and closed the gap which had existed with other European countries like France, Germany or Great Britain since its birth as a nation.[273] The 'golden age' of unparalleled economic prosperity in fact lasted in most of the OECD countries until the oil shock of 1973.[274] This period saw a growth of GDP and GDP per capita on an unprecedented scale in all parts of the world economy, a rapid growth of world trade, a reopening of world capital markets and possibilities of international migration. The average per capita growth in Italy was 4.8 and in Germany it was 4.9.[275]

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[271] Introduction by N. Piers Ludlow, in N. Piers Ludlow (ed.), *European Integration and the Cold War. Ost-Westpolitik, 1965-1973* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 4.

[272] In Italy the effect of the Common Market was clear for all to see: the percentage of Italian goods destined for the EEC countries rose from 23 percent in 1955 to 29.8 percent in 1960 and 40.2 percent in 1965, see Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy. Society and Politics 1943-1988* (New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 214. For figures on Germany's economic performance during those years, unemployment rates, public expenditure, and GDP see Werner Abelshauser, *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte seit 1945* (München: Verlag C.H.Beck, 2004), p. 289 and p. 293.

[273] Favretto, *The Long Search*, p. 24.

[274] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

[275] Angus Maddison, *The World Economy in the 20th Century* (Paris: Development Centre of the OECD, 1989), pp. 34-35.

In the 1950s, policy revisionism was elaborated within a context of conservative hegemony, (CDU/CSU in Germany) and long periods of left-wing opposition plus a wake of successive electoral setbacks (national elections in 1953 and 1957) that induced parts of the SPD to thoroughly rethink some of its previous positions.[276] This development was not exclusive to the SPD but can be observed by examining the Western European Left in general. In Italy, the PCI's gradual process of revisionism coincided with the opening to the Left (i.e. the PSI's gradual distancing from the PCI and subsequent inclusion in the governmental alliance in December 1963). This had further contributed to the isolation of the Communists on a national level. In ideological terms, this created a greater extent of consensus politics and the termination of divergence over principles. Europe and the economic integration process were viewed and approached in the context of Realpolitik and former, partially ideological, positions (PCI) were slowly revised. Within political systems of proportional representation such as in Italy and Germany, 'the making of politics' always consists of the mobilisation of support in terms of voters and political allies: this requires the construction of policy consensus, an overlapping of positions and the optimisation of support for a certain political stance. Hence, the conversion from hostility to support of the European integration process must also be viewed in this context. It demonstrated the fact that the SPD's and PCI's policies were increasingly shaped by the acknowledged necessity for greater pragmatism and by an ever more pronounced electoral orientation.

No mono-causal explanation is sufficient to account for the SPD's and the PCI's policy shift towards favouring economic integration with the West. The general hypothesis, however, is that domestic considerations were almost exclusively responsible for the parties' policy reappraisal towards European integration. These were the adaptation to the economic principles of the capitalist system, the recognition of the economic boom as a direct

[276] Favretto, *The Long Search*, p. 3.

consequence of integration, trade union influence, electoral considerations and the search for bi-partisanship in foreign policy as a means to achieve governmental consensus. Of course, the extent of these aspects on influencing policy shifts varied somewhat. Even so, considerable similarities between SPD and PCI can be produced.

The diversity of the two parties allows one to make some useful and interesting comparisons, identifying whether policy shifts are caused by ideological reconsiderations or an adaptation to the political, economic and social circumstances. By examining the positions of two diverse parties (i.e. from different political and ideological camps) one can make general assumptions and conclusions about the origins of revisionism that affected wider sections of the West European Left. In this particular context, special emphasis will be made on the PCI's national character (which shaped and determined party policy) and only secondarily as an integral part of the international communist movement. The latter was important in as much as it shows that the global communist movement was gradually replaced as the PCI's sole and exclusive point of reference and external element of legitimisation. Though the PCI's internationalism continued to be a matter of deepest, inescapable but also ambivalent identity, Europe assumed an ever greater importance for the PCI.[277] In many ways, the PCI's post-war history can be characterised as a constant struggle to define and redefine the nature of its deep but ambiguous relations with the Soviet Union and the world communist movement. With regard to European integration, the PCI identified its own national interests in the struggle for socialism at an early stage. In part, this was possible because it did not raise the question of loyalty to Moscow, the belonging to the international communist movement or the general bloc orientation of the PCI, and did not involve the so often painful 'choice of sides'.[278]

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[277] See, for instance, Maggiorani who argued that by the mid-1970s, due to the progressive economic successes resulting from economic integration with the West, the PCI's Europeanism became an undisputed choice, in Maggiorani, *L'Europa degli altri. Comunisti italiani e integrazione europea*, p. 305.

[278] It should also be noted that the Soviet Union itself somewhat qualified its hostility towards the Common Market in the 1960s and acknowledged its acceptance.

The Cold War element and the 'logic of the blocs' was inherent in the PCI's idea of an autonomous Europe. The PCI's vague concept of an autonomous and independently acting Italian foreign policy was transmitted on to the European platform. Initially (in the 1960s) this Europe was pictured as a globally acting and politically as well as economically independent (from the US) force in the East-West conflict, which in turn would guarantee a greater amount of autonomy for Italy's national affairs. Towards the 1970s, Europe played an ever greater importance in the East-West conflict and assumed an equidistant role in the PCI's concept of détente. In the 1970s, independence and autonomy were increasingly sought from the Soviet Union as well, whose system was in contradiction with, and marked an impediment to the very idea of socialism as envisaged by the PCI.

In the immediate post-war period until 1960, it had been difficult to clearly separate the SPD's domestic policies from foreign policies on certain aspects. The most obvious example of this interrelatedness was the SPD's *Deutschlandpolitik* (German policy). As implied in the name, this policy would normally fall in the realm of domestic policies. Nonetheless, the SPD's German policy and changes in intra-German relations affected and determined all other foreign policy aspects of the SPD. Foreign policy considerations were almost totally subordinated to the primacy of national policies and ambitions. Foreign policy aspects were subservient to the SPD's German (and reunification) policy – which, in the 1950s, was undeniably assigned to the realm of domestic policy but shaped the SPD's foreign policy significantly, if not exclusively. It was only in 1960 that the SPD acknowledged the interrelatedness of the German problem with the Cold War and that solutions to it must be sought in the context of the East-West relations. In the early 1950s therefore, the SPD's equivocal choice for Europe was (officially) to an overriding extent hindered by the desire for reunification.

The SPD's policy reversal vis-à-vis European economic integration, however, preceded the party's strategic reassessment of NATO and the domestic consensus-seeking course, as envisaged in the Bad Godesberg Programme. At first sight, the former may seem in contradiction with the SPD's very concept of national reunification. A closer analysis, however, demonstrates that the SPD's objection to European economic integration was only secondarily influenced by the reunification line. The PCI's gradual endorsement of Europeanism also preceded the conversion to Atlanticism. The PCI's initial reluctance and hostility towards Western European integration was thoroughly rethought at the beginning of the 1960s. The almost parallel juncture of the two parties' policy reversal in support of the EEC was striking.

An analysis of the two parties' policy towards Europe – especially when given consideration to European socialist, social democratic and labour parties in general – shows that one can not speak of particular 'socialist', 'social democratic' or 'communist' positions. Opposition to European integration was widely diffused in Western Europe (i.e. in Britain and Scandinavia) and not a distinctive feature of communist parties exclusively. National reasons were often responsible for that. It should also be noted that the PCI's revisionism towards Europe occurred well before that of some of the political parties of Britain and Scandinavia. With regard to the PCI's European counterparts, for example the PCF, the Italian Communists' 'European outlook' was unique to all intents and purposes. It will also be demonstrated here that the positions of the SPD and PCI on European integration had never significantly differed. In more general terms, following Sassoon, the position of the PCI had not been fundamentally diverse from those of Western European social democratic parties.[279] This suggests that the 'pros' and 'cons' about European integration were perceived from a national

[279] In contrast for instance to the PCF, whose Europeanism had never assumed the flexibility or dimension comparable to the PCI's, see D. Sassoon, 'La sinistra, l'Europa, il PCI', in Roberto Gualtieri (ed.), *Il PCI nell'Italia repubblicana 1943-1991* (Roma: Carocci Editore, 2001), p. 223 and p. 237.

perspective, i.e. supported or opposed to in consideration with national economic or political interests. Ideology and former dogmatic positions were gradually replaced by Realpolitik. The choice of the PCI and SPD provides an interesting case study in support of this hypothesis.

Both parties had opposed the initial stages of the integration process and came to acknowledge the 'fruits' of it in the coming years. Even the juncture of their revisionism manifests a remarkable convergence between the two political parties. In both cases, their declining opposition to European integration was part of a general process of de-ideologisation of the two parties. Policy revisionism towards European economic integration went hand in hand with the decline of ideology in party programmes and policies in becoming acceptable to wider sections of society. It was part of the process of becoming a 'people's party'. Implanting themselves in society in terms of adherents and voters, as well as seeking relations with other political forces, rendered this process obligatory.

Even if the PCI still remained a communist party after all – and in the 1960s the Soviet Union, without doubt, marked its most important point of reference, the PCI softened ideologically and a significant convergence of positions and motivations for policy shifts can be found between the SPD and the PCI. Hence, European policy revisionism and the origins of the transformation process produced considerable similarities in the two political forces.

It will also be suggested here that one cannot as rigorously separate or deny any correlation between the SPD's Ostpolitik and European integration as has previously been done in some of the literature.[280] European integration must also be analysed in the Cold War context and

[280] See Andreas Wilkens who argued that there was no relationship between Ostpolitik and European integration, only on a general level that Brandt took every opportunity to insist that the solid anchorage of W. Germany within the European and Atlantic structures was a precondition for an Eastern policy, in A. Wilkens, 'New Ostpolitik and European integration', in P. Ludlow (ed.), *European Integration and the Cold War. Ostpolitik-Westpolitik, 1965-1973*, p. 69.

cannot be as clearly separated from the SPD's policies towards the East. For the PCI, Europe assumed an ever greater importance in the late 1960s and 1970s. It marked part of the wider, fundamental party strategy to become a legitimate national force. By the mid-1970s the PCI can be perceived as an integral part of the Western European Left (which the party officially did a decade later). The PCI sought convergences of interest and strategic alliances with other parties on the European platform, well beyond fraternal links with some of the other West European communist parties. The Cold War framework was of great importance to the development of the PCI's national identity and by the late 1970s Western Europe had significantly altered the PCI's previous Soviet-aligned internationalism. It no longer marked the party's external point of legitimisation or most significant point of identification.

2.) SPD policies towards Europe: from intransigence to endorsement

Though rhetorically pro-European, the SPD had opposed all concrete steps towards European integration in the early 1950s. A number of factors explain the SPD's policy shift from opposition to support of economic integration with the West. The SPD never opposed economic integration *per se*, thus not for ideological reasons. Rather, in the early stages, Schumacher put the Western European integration process under 'qualified acceptance'. As long as it did not hinder the reunification process, integration with the West would be supported unreservedly, so said the official party policy. Schumacher's vision entailed the integration of a 'free and democratic Germany into a community of free people on the basis of equality of all members'. This Europe would naturally be socialist, as this was the necessary precondition for democracy and equality.[281] Integration was in fact endorsed as Western

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[281] Hrbek, *Die SPD-Deutschland und Europa*, p. 34.

prosperity was seen to have a possible domino impact on the building of communist regimes in the East.

Schumacher's European policies were complex and ambivalent, and a simple link with the reunification argument does not sufficiently account for the party's growing hostility.[282] The question of Germany's equality in the newly established institutions (Ruhr statute, Council of Europe, ECSC, EDC) and the capitalist nature of those were constantly interwoven with the unification aspect.[283] It has been almost unequivocally held in most of the literature that the desire for national reunification predominantly shaped and determined the SPD's European policies in the early stages.[284] While this aspect was used as an explanatory factor for the party's intransigence, it did not determine the party's course exclusively. Rather, it will be suggested here that during the Schumacher period, the reunification argument often seemed as a mere pretext. Schumacher had greatly emphasised Germany's willingness to cooperate but only on the basis of full equality.[285] As argued before, Schumacher's reservations were rather nationalist in tone.[286] The demand for Germany's equality in all European projects was emphasised to the extent that one may even argue that Germany's division as a hindrance to integration was simply exploited as a pretext to the more crucial impediment of Germany's deficient equality in the institutions.[287]

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[282] Ramuschkat, *Die SPD und der europäische Einigungsprozess*, p. 191.
[283] Equality largely referred to voting rights in the various newly established European bodies. Schumacher propagated the principle of non-discrimination.
[284] See, for instance, Bellers, *EWG und die "Godesberger" SPD*, p. 292.
[285] See, for example, Wolfgang Benz who argued that Schumacher's priorities were German reunification and the equality of Germany in this European association, in 'Kurt Schumachers Europakonzeption', in Ludolf Herbst, Werner Bührer, Hanno Sowade (eds), *Vom Marshallplan zur EWG* (München: R. Oldenbourg, 1990), p. 47. See also Ossip. K. Flechtheim, who stressed that until Schumacher's death, the SPD not only supported reunification in favour of integration in the Europe of the six, but as a 'national party' also heavily attacked Adenauer for failing to integrate Germany on the basis of full equality, in Ossip K. Flechtheim (ed.), *Die Parteien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe, 1973), p. 20.
[286] According to Schumacher, the ECSC would institutionalise French control over German industry. See, for example, Schumacher, 'Unser Nein zum Schumanplan', *Hamburger Echo*, No. 93, 21. April 1951, p. 2, re-printed in Schumacher, *Reden, Schriften, Korrespondenzen 1945-1952*, pp. 806-807.
[287] A contradiction in the SPD's reunification and European policy may be seen in the fact that Marshall Aid was unequivocally endorsed by the SPD – although it clearly had a Cold War connotation to it and accelerated the merger of the three zones in West Germany and de-coupled those from the East.

The SPD demanded above all full parity, the inclusion of Britain and Scandinavia, the rejection of the capitalist, conservative and cartelistic structure of the 'Europe of the Six', dismissing the fragmentation of Germany's basic industry in favour of capitalist groups and interests, and unconditional equality and membership in all institutions without discrimination.[288] Schumacher despised the capitalist nature of the 'Europe of the Six'. British and Scandinavian membership was therefore enthusiastically endorsed so as to change the character of Europe and render it more socialist. Consequently, the implication of this line of argument is that the reunification issue would not have prevented the SPD's approval of the Schuman Plan had it included Britain, and if Germany's economic interests had been more rigorously defended and incorporated. After his death in 1952, Schumacher's intransigent line was continued by Erich Ollenhauer, who acted, however, more as an interim leader of the SPD.[289] After the 1957 electoral defeat, the previous monolithic style of party guidance was brought to a close and changes in European policy gradually came to the fore.

2.1) The German trade unions and European economic integration

The ECSC had in large parts become associated with the renewal and preservation of economic prosperity in the public mind. The DGB had already favoured West Germany's integration in the ECSC.[290] Trade union leaders had become more enthusiastic about European integration mainly because it coincided with the period of economic prosperity in Western Europe. With the de-coupling of German rearmament (which the DGB had fiercely opposed together with the SPD) from economic integration in 1955 (Germany's inclusion in NATO), the integration process was ever more enthusiastically endorsed by the trade unions.

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[288] SPD press release 'Seven preconditions in order to support the ECSC', 20 April 1951, re-printed in Schumacher, *Reden, Schriften, Korrespondenzen 1945-1952*, p. 805.

[289] Ollenhauer's leadership was accompanied by a personnel restructuring of the parliamentary faction after the 1957 electoral defeat. Against Ollenhauer's will, the leadership of the SPD in parliament was subsequently led by a group of reformers like Carlo Schmid, Fritz Erler and Herbert Wehner. See Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, pp. 208-209.

[290] On 7 May 1951 the DGB had published a communiqué expressing its approval of the Coal and Steel Community with certain provisions – which were mainly that the trade unions' interests be safeguarded at all levels and that full employment and high standards of living be protected.

The DGB, already supportive of both ECSC and the EEC, pressed the SPD to renounce its economic programme of nationalisation and subsidised investment toward market oriented policies, as well as towards including European integration.[291] Both SPD and PCI were under pressure from their respective trade unions to re-examine their policies towards Europe. In both cases, trade unions had very early on adopted diverging positions from the parties they were affiliated with. Similarities between trade union pressures in Italy and Germany were striking.

The SPD had never been united over its European course. For much of the 1950s, Willy Brandt's commitment to West Germany's integration with the West, NATO and the evolving European Communities set him apart from the mainstream of his party.[292] Other leading figures like Ernst Reuter and Carlo Schmid favoured the integration process from the outset and some considered integration with the West as important as unification with the East, or at least did not necessarily see an incompatibility between the two. Nonetheless, Schumacher's line had remained predominant. After 1952, internal party pressures for a re-examination, in combination with external pressures from trade union elements partially led the SPD to speak in favour of the EEC and the atomic energy community EURATOM.[293] Changes over the Saar problem also contributed, though marginally, toward a positive evaluation of the Rome Treaties. The attainment of a satisfactory solution to the Saar problem had been an SPD precondition for a general acceptance of economic integration with the West.[294] The conclusion of the Saar plebiscite on 23 October 1955 removed another possible source of

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[291] Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 98. See also Featherstone, who highlights that the 'implausibility of the SPD maintaining its opposition towards European integration in the 1950s, is partly to be explained by the attitudes of the trade unions', in *Socialist Parties and European Integration*, p. 164.

[292] Arne Hofmann, *The Emergence of Détente in Europe. Brandt, Kennedy and the formation of Ostpolitik* (Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 3.

[293] Bellers, *Reformpartei und EWG-Strategie der SPD*, p. 80.

[294] The SPD had argued that an annexation of the Saar by France would automatically put Germany in a legally and morally inferior position over demands of the national borders in the East.

disagreement. On 1 January 1957 the Saar was reunited with Germany. This rendered Germany's inclusion viable as a separate Saar identity was no longer an issue of dissent.[295]

2.2) The road to Europe: SPD approval of the Treaties of Rome

On 24 June 1957 the SPD parliamentary faction decided to support the ratification of the Rome treaties.[296] In part, the vote in favour of the EEC was justified by the SPD in parliament by noting that in contrast to the ECSC and EDC, the EEC did not raise fundamental geopolitical issues, and its social and economic credentials were desirable, albeit with certain reservations.[297] These entailed demands for full employment and improved living standards.[298]

From 1955 onwards, Herbert Wehner and party leader Erich Ollenhauer had joined Jean Monnet's newly established 'Action-Committee for the United States of Europe'. This confirmed the SPD's principle willingness to constructively accompany the succeeding integration steps. The contribution towards the workings of this action committee diminished the party's previous hostility and liberated the SPD from its negative, anti-European image considerably.[299] It helped the SPD to design and co-formulate new integration concepts and in part managed to secure the majority of the SPD vote in parliament in favour of the Rome Treaties. The few remaining concerns about a consolidation of Germany's division were displaced by arguing that the Common Market would in any case be solely (and fully)

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[295] On the subject see also Bellers, *Reformpartei und EWG-Strategie der SPD*, pp. 70-73.

[296] The Rome Treaties were not approved of by the SPD unanimously. In a parliamentary faction meeting, six members, most importantly Herbert Wehner, spoke in favour of abstention in the parliamentary vote. Others, such as Ollenhauer, advocated support of the treaties to prevent further obstacles for the coming national election campaign. Helmut Schmidt voted against the treaties on the grounds of British and Scandinavian abstention from it. The SPD parliamentary faction meeting ultimately approved the treaties by a majority of ten votes. See Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 172. See also Loth, 'Von Heidelberg nach Godesberg: Europa-Konzepte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie zwischen Utopie und Politik', p. 218.

[297] Wilhelm Mellies, 'Erklärung der SPD-Bundestagsfraktion zur Begründung ihrer Zustimmung zu den Römischen Verträgen', re-printed in SPD (ed.), *Parlamentarische Positionen zu Europa*, pp. 27-28.

[298] Ibid., p. 27.

[299] Loth, 'Von Heidelberg nach Godesberg', p. 217.

consolidated in fifteen years.[300] This further underlines the argument that the reunification line had lost its significance and was no longer seen, if ever, as a hindrance to economic integration with the West.[301] Fundamental to changes in the SPD's European policies was also the de-coupling of economic integration from military integration with the FRG's inclusion in NATO in 1955. Quite plausibly Germany's adherence to NATO made SPD acceptance of the Rome Treaties possible. The military division of Germany had become a given and unchangeable fact for an uncertain period of time. This paved the way for acceptance of economic integration with the West. It may somewhat be overstating it, but it may even be maintained that contrary to the debate in the context of NATO, the SPD's early anti-Europeanism had never been determined by the reunification aspect.

Paradoxically though, the SPD's acceptance of the Rome Treaties was simplified and enabled through continued party opposition to NATO until June 1960 (in which the reunification idea was still inherent).[302] Analogies to the PCI's differentiated balancing between pro-Europeanism and anti-Atlanticism in the 1960s were certainly noticeable. The PCI's fierce, partially ideological, polemics and opposition to Atlanticism and the military alliance allowed for a greater leeway towards Europe.

3.) Italian Parties and European economic integration

Opposition to the Common Market was not exclusive to communist parties. In Italy, the Italian Socialists under Nenni had warned of the dangers of the EEC 'leading to sharp impoverishment' of the poorer regions, whilst the richer areas benefited even more. The

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[300] Ibid.

[301] Moravcsik allocated the point of the SPD's policy reversal to 1955: after the failure of Adenauer's 1955 Moscow trip and the failure of the Geneva conference, reunification had been downgraded as an immediate goal; see *The Choice for Europe*, p. 95.

[302] Heinrich Deist, one of the SPD's leading economists, stressed that the securing of the SPD majority in favour was rendered possible because the treaties had clearly detached economic integration from military bloc building, as quoted by Susanne Miller, *Die SPD vor und nach Godesberg*, p. 129.

Italian Left, not just communist, spoke of the EEC as strengthening the industrial monopolies and as damaging to Italian agriculture.[303] The forces of the Italian left (with exception of the Social Democrats) for their part during the early integration years, were opposed to or diffident towards European integration in perception of it only as a fact of pro-US foreign policy and primarily as a by-product of Atlanticism.[304]

When the Treaties of Rome were put to a vote in Italian parliament in July 1957, the PSI took a position of benevolent abstention on the EEC, but supported EURATOM.[305] The PSI's anti-Atlanticism was slowly dropped and the idea of Europe endorsed. After 1956, the autonomist faction in the PSI had paved the way for a distancing from the Communists. This was an essential step towards the party's incorporation in the first centre-left government in December 1963. With the increasing ambition to seek an alliance with the DC, the Socialists saw the EEC as an opportunity to gain support for their domestic policies.[306]

With exception of the PCI and Nenni's Socialist party, the other Italian political forces had endorsed all European integration projects from the outset. The DC, the Social Democrats, the Liberals (PLI), and Republicans (PRI) all supported political and economic integration as part of the Atlantic system. The DC, in particular, approached European integration as an aspect of the Atlantic link and objected to any scheme for further integration that might lead to greater autonomy for Europe. Constants of the DC's European policy have been the total adherence to the idea of the political union of Europe, the rejection of the Gaullist conception of a centre-right Europe, and endorsement of the democratisation of Community institutions via the election of the EP through universal suffrage.[307] The DC favoured British entry in the

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[303] Featherstone, *Socialist Parties and European Integration*, p. 224.
[304] Ronzitti, 'Italian Political Parties', p. 20.
[305] Featherstone argued that the PSI was more comfortable with EURATOM; it was seen as the only 'practical possibility' for Italy to participate in new scientific development, a field in which the capacity of individual nations was shown to be inadequate, in ibid. pp. 224-225.
[306] Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO, and the European Community*, pp. 11-12.
[307] Ronzitti, 'Italian Political Parties', p. 11.

Common Market accordingly.[308] It was a commonality of virtually all Italian political forces to perceive of the EEC (as well as the Atlantic Alliance) as an external factor which had to be supported unequivocally but could also be utilised to promote certain domestic political ambitions. The pre-eminence of the Atlantic relationship in Italian eyes has been a major cause of the country's equivocal behaviour towards the European Community. By perceiving NATO and the EEC as two interrelated processes, Italian leaders tended to approach them in a similar manner, mostly by reasserting their loyalty to both. At the Community level this led to Italy's strong support of contradictory developments such as supra-nationality and Britain's admission to the EEC. Ultimately, in giving priority to the Atlantic relationship, Italy's behaviour within the European Community sought to undermine De Gaulle's 'French-dominated European Europe'.[309]

3.1) The PCI and European economic integration

In the 1950s, Europe did not rank high in the PCI's strategic priorities. Statements were rare and generally limited to a propagandistic nature.[310] These were aligned with Moscow's judgment about Western integration. In light of the debates over the Rome Treaties, the PCI opposed the very idea of regional integration limited to Western Europe and oriented to the Atlantic Alliance. In accord with the Soviet response to the Treaty of Rome, the PCI regarded the EEC like another manifestation of American imperialism and a 'conspiracy of monopolies' against the working class.[311] Moreover, the treaties were directly linked to the

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[308] Vannicelli, *Italy, NATO, and the European Community*, pp. 34.
[309] Ibid., pp. 48-49.
[310] This led Maggiorani to highlight that at the PCI's Eighth Congress in 1956 Togliatti dedicated only one minute of his report to the 'European question'. This was intended to underline the marginality of PCI thinking on that matter. See Maggiorani, *L'Europa degli altri*, p. 47.
[311] 'Sul Mercato comune europeo', Comuniqué by the PCI's Direzione, 24 March 1957, in PCI (ed.), *Documenti politici e direttive del Partito comunista italiano dall'VIII al IX* Congresso, (Roma: 1960), p. 47.

North Atlantic Pact.[312] PCI statements were restricted to the somewhat simplistic demand for the suspension of the Treaties of Rome whenever possible until an alternative proposal had been established.[313] This alternative proposal – without being specified – would entail Eastern Europe and not be limited to integration with the West. The idea of the Common Market as an autarchic and closed economic entity was dismissed altogether and the PCI advocated its extension to the socialist countries in Eastern Europe instead.[314] This would terminate the political connotation to the EEC as an American imperialist tool. This, however, also implies that the PCI's objections were not ideologically motivated, as the party was not opposed to economic integration *per se* but to this particular form of regional integration as a by-product of the Cold War. In a speech to the European Parliament in March 1969 Giorgio Amendola, one of the PCI's most outspoken pro-Europeans, retained that the PCI's initial opposition did not derive from denying the necessity of economic collaboration as such, but because it was born as a political mechanism which would further the division of Europe.[315] Hence, PCI propaganda was ideological in tone - to say that Soviet positions on Western European integration were largely adopted uncritically – but not ideologically motivated in principle. This was also the main line as advocated by Western European communist parties. In a joint declaration, the communist parties of the Europe of the Six underlined that 'the ECSC and the

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[312] 'Sul Mercato comune europeo', in ibid., pp. 45-47. It is worth noting that in 1978 the PCI though having become a pro-European party still maintained the validity of this initial judgement of the European Community, see PCI (ed.), *Progetto di tesi per il XV Congresso nazionale del PCI* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1978), p. 40. See also Giorgio Amendola who later recalled that the PCI's hostility was appropriate in the specific circumstances of the 1950s. The original and undisclosed purpose of the EEC, its shortcomings and inherent errors had been the undeniable 'umbilical cord' with the Atlantic Alliance; in G. Amendola, *Il rinnovamento del PCI. Intervista di Renato Nicolai* (Roma: Editori Riuniti,1978), pp. 195-197.

[313] 'Bandire dall'Italia le armi atomiche e sospendere il MEC', Comuniqué of the PCI's Direzione, 25 April 1958, in PCI (ed.), *Documenti politici e direttive del Partito comunista italiano dall'VIII al IX Congresso*, p. 288. 'Risoluzione della Direzione del PCI', 8 January 1959, in ibid., p. 416; 'Per il rinnovamento democratico della società italiana. Per avanzare verso il socialismo', 9th National Congress in 1960, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano III 1956-1964* (Venezia: Edizioni del Calendario, 1985), p. 290.

[314] Other PCI statements in fact spoke about the extension of commercial relation to socialist and neutral states in order to create a united world market. See 'Tesi del X Congresso Nazionale 1962', in *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer ...III 1956-1964*, p. 403.

[315] G. Amendola, 'Discorso al Parlamento europeo', 12 March 1969 in Mauro Maggiorani, Paolo Ferrari (eds), *L'Europa da Togliatti a Berlinguer. Testimonianze e Documenti 1945-1984* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005), p. 284.

Common Market represented the economic and political by-products of American policy in Europe'.[316]

PCI critical judgments were in general limited to the negative and devastating impact of the EEC on Italy's agriculture as well as the previously highlighted political connotation to it as an American imperialist tool. Arturo Colombi, member of the PCI's Direzione, voiced that the 'economic miracle' in reality contributed to a relative regression of Italy's agriculture, deteriorating the living conditions of farmers and of agricultural labour.[317]

Even though this remained official party policy until a gradual reversal was offset in 1962, differentiating voices had existed, above all in CGIL circles. This ultimately had an influence on the PCI's revisionism that should not be underestimated.

3.2) The PCI, the CGIL and European Integration

The PCI's analysis of the negative effects of European economic integration (or the party's lack of substantial examination) was not paralleled by the communist-socialist trade union movement, CGIL. Though contrary to the DGB, the treaties were, from an overall perspective, rejected. Trade union circles adopted a differentiated position vis-à-vis the Treaties of Rome, arguing that the solution can not consist of a simplistic call for the suspension of the Common Market.[318] In December 1959 Eugenio Peggio, an economic expert of the PCI, underlined that the initial character of the EEC had changed. 'Contrary to its expectations, the economic integration process of the small Europe of the Six has assumed a different significance and characterisation. It in fact had an impact on international détente

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[316] 'Contro la CECA e il MEC, una politica nuova in Europa', declaration of the communist parties of the six countries of the 'small Europe', in PCI (ed.), *Documenti politici e direttive del Partito comunista italiano dall'VIII al IX Congresso*, p. 437.
[317] Arturo Colombi in *VI Consiglio Nazionale*, 1960, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano III 1956-1964*, p. 311.
[318] Antonio Pesenti, 'Sospensione + Riforme', originally from *Vie Nuove*, 17 May 1958, re-printed in Maggiorani, Ferrari (eds), *L'Europa da Togliatti a Berlinguer*, p. 251.

and contributed to the decline of American hegemony of Western European economies.' Moreover, so Peggio concluded, the EEC has lost its character as an instrument of coercion and of NATO, and in fact had destabilising effects on the Atlantic Alliance on the European continent.[319]

The CGIL's acknowledgment and in principle acceptance of the EEC became somewhat of a fundamental choice, motivated by the conviction that workers' actions can no longer be coordinated in isolation on a national scale, but would in fact have to assume levels of international coordination, especially in the Common Market area.[320] A fundamental impetus for the PCI to rethink its positions thus came without doubt from the CGIL. Due to the strong presence of the Socialists in the CGIL (one-third) and the PCI's strong determination not to break with the union, the Communists tried to minimise the differences between their views and those of the CGIL on the EEC.[321]

3.3) The PCI's policy shift towards Europe

Domestically, West European communist parties in the 1960s were faced with the visible success of capitalist modernisation. In Italy, the 'economic miracle' of the late 1950s to the 1960s rapidly modernised the economy and transformed it from a predominantly agrarian country into an industrial-agrarian economy. Economic success had its negative impacts as well. Though overall national wealth increased rapidly and unprecedently in this period, it developed along uneven patterns, in geographical and sociological terms. Massive immigration from the poverty-stricken south to the industrialised north of the country occurred, which in turn was one of the causes behind the political radicalisation of the

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[319] Eugenio Peggio, 'Riesaminare il MEC?', originally from *Politica ed Economia*, No. 12, December 1959, re-printed in Maggiorani, Ferrari (eds), *L'Europa da Togliatti a Berlinguer*, pp. 252-253.
[320] Maggiorani, *L'Europa degli altri*, pp. 113-114.
[321] On the subject see also Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani*, pp. 120-122.

workers in the 1960s.[322] Despite these accompanying negative developments, the long waves of capitalist expansion called for some reconsideration of the idea of the inevitable collapse of the system.[323] The fact that capitalism, the very system communist parties were born to oppose, has been constantly evolving and has gone through fundamental transformations throughout the century could not leave socialists and communists unaffected.[324] The capitalist system not only proved resistant and able to transform itself successfully, but it also proved beneficial to the working class in a way that had previously been unexpected. As Favretto put it, it was only with the golden age of economic wealth and prosperity across Western Europe as experienced in the 1950s and 1960s, that the right conditions existed for revisionism to make a real breakthrough in socialist thinking.[325] This development was not distinctively 'socialist' but had occurred in 'communist' thinking too.

The PCI's modified position and judgement on European integration also have to be viewed in the framework of changes on the domestic political scene. The beginning of the 1960s saw the gradual emergence of the first centre-left governments which led to further isolation of the PCI.[326] Moreover, the PCI, if it hoped to implement its governmental ambitions, had to adapt to new economic circumstances such as the (largely unexpected) post-war boom of the Italian economy. The realisation of economic progress, in conjunction with trade union pressures and changes in the domestic political setting, contributed to a profound rethinking of the PCI's European policy.

The most overt change of the PCI's position thus far occurred in the context of the 'Convention on Italian Capitalism' in 1962, when Giorgio Amendola admitted the possibilities conceded by the EEC for Italy's modernisation.

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[322] Bracke, *Which Socialism, Whose détente?*, p. 33.
[323] Favretto, *The Long Search*, p. 2.
[324] Ibid., p. 172.
[325] Ibid., p. 3.
[326] See, for instance, Ronzitti who argued that the contribution of the PSI towards the Europeistic evolution of the PCI seem to have been great, in 'Italian Political Parties', pp. 19-20.

Our position, a politically responsible one, in criticising the EEC, was accompanied, however, by an erroneous overestimation of the economic difficulties which would have followed the application of the Community regulations and by an underestimation of the new possibilities for the expansion of the Italian economy which arose out of the initial formation of a European market. In fact it is in the interest of the working class to favour an economic development which would allow the Italian economy to acquire competitive capabilities in the international market. Technical progress and the modernization of the Italian economy are exigencies which must be supported in a context of a policy of democratic development and not of conservation of the backward positions of minor groups of the Italian bourgeoisie. Inevitably the EEC contributes to the process of capitalist centralisation and concentration, causes the crisis of re-adjustment, sweeps away positions which are working on excessively high unit costs. But all this necessitates the development, on the part of the working class, of a 'European' struggle, in full agreement with the working forces of the other EEC countries against the monopolistic forces which control the executive organs of the EEC.[327]

The Italian Communists came to admit the potentialities and prospects of the EEC for the Italian economy. The EEC was no longer exclusively seen as a capitalist enemy but as a capitalist construction which, if shaped and altered from within, could prove profitable to the social productive forces in Italy.[328]

The PCI's policy shift towards the Common Market and Western European integration thus gradually occurred around 1962 and was a first step towards greater autonomy from Moscow. Though later perceived as a given reality, Soviet leaders had of course despised the creation of a Common Market (and all other European projects) as a political construction which they dismissed as merely a tool of American Cold War strategy in Western Europe. Moscow

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[327] Giorgio Amendola, *Lotta di classe e sviluppo economico dopo la liberazione* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1962), p. 86.

[328] This has been amply discussed and affirmed during a meeting of the PCI's central committee on 26-28 April 1962 in APC, MF 026. See also *L'Unità*, 27 April 1962. On the subject see also Vassilis Fouskas, *Italy, Europe, the Left. The transformation of Italian Communism and the European imperative* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p. 32.

consequently compelled European communist parties to launch domestic resistance directed at its destruction. In comparison with its European counterparts, the PCI had developed a very distinct position on the Common Market very early on.[329] This only reflected upon the fact that the PCI began to identify national interests of its own, which were not necessarily compatible with Soviet foreign policy interests. The Italian domestic scene could only but coax the PCI to somewhat qualify and re-think former attitudes towards Europe.

The development of an Italian road to socialism could not, as Sassoon put it, proceed in a unilinear fashion. It was constrained not only by the realities of the social struggle in Italy, but also heavily conditioned by international considerations, mainly, the location of Italy in the American sphere of influence in Europe and the relations of the PCI in the world communist movement.[330] Though economic integration with the West fell into the realm of what the PCI termed the 'logic of the blocs' and thus heavily despised, the PCI came to acknowledge the existence of this economic bloc (and Italy's belonging to it) and that it would prove more favourable to work from within this reality. It was an acceptance on qualified terms. By accepting its reality and working from within, the PCI hoped to stem the process in more favourable conditions, which could be accepted without reservation. In the 1970s Giorgio Napolitano recalled that the 'Community could serve as a spokesman for Western Europe's vital need for economic independence; it could favour an autonomous and coordinated development and support a common resistance to the threat that the present phase of the world crisis (1970s) will lead the US to reaffirm and strengthen its supremacy against the countries of capitalist Europe. This is the line for which we fight within the EEC.'[331]

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[329] This led Timmermann to the assumption that the PCI was motivated above all by national policy objectives which in this context meant active participation from within to direct the process in more favourable directions. With regard to the European integration context, Timmermann's analysis is most certainly accurate. See Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani*, p. 102.

[330] Sassoon, 'The European Strategy of the Italian Communist Party', in Sassoon (ed.), *The Italian Communists speak for themselves* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1978), p. 10.

[331] G. Napolitano, *The Italian Road*, p. 57.

Interestingly both PCI and SPD came to acknowledge the existence of and adherence to the economic aspects of the bloc confrontation, while continuing to proclaim opposition to the belonging to a military bloc for some time.

The PCI began to view economic integration as an irreversible process which had to be viewed, if not positively, at least constructively. This was because the very idea of national sovereignty had, due to the increase and challenge of globally functioning forces (such as multinational organised capital) lost its driving force. The newly developing global challenges could no longer be responded to from a purely national perspective but had to assume a multinational dimension as well. Antonio Rubbi later retained that the PCI's positive attitude towards integration derived from the awareness that certain issues such as health, environment, industrial and agrarian development and the control of multinational enterprises could no longer be addressed within closed national borders due to the increased interdependence of cross border problems.[332] The protection of national interests is also inherent in the PCI's thinking and change of course. The return to national protectionism was not only impossible but indeed contrary to the interests of the working class, which in principle found itself advantaged by the installation of markets without barriers. However, the logic of integration did not, for the PCI, lead to full and unequivocal adherence to the present community structures and policies. Again, the Common Market represented an instrument not to be destroyed but to be modified from within. Timmermann has correctly maintained that the PCI's support of the economic Community was guided by a 'yes' in principle. This approval referred to the existence of the Community and communist participation from within. This 'yes' in principle was accompanied by a certain hesitant 'but' which applied to the contents and precise Community structures.[333]

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[332] Rubbi was a prominent foreign policy spokesman in the PCI. See Rubbi, *Il Mondo*, pp. 29-30.
[333] Heinz Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani*, p. 112.

The struggle against monopolistic capital and tendencies would have to be coordinated on a European level.[334] In his 'Yalta memorandum' Togliatti had come to the recognition that, 'In today's conditions in the West, the struggle of the unions can no longer be conducted in isolation, country by country. It will have to be developed on the international scale too, with common demands and actions.'[335] Although the PCI's opposition to European integration, much as it was a product of alignment with the Soviet Union in the Cold War, it was also a manifestation of the belief in national solutions. The PCI increasingly detached itself from this perception in as much as it no longer believed in a purely Italian road to socialism.

The PCI's Europeistic option became ever more accentuated. By the beginning of the 1970s, the Europeanism of the PCI had become an undisputed choice.[336] The PCI's Europeanism did not confine to an indifferent observing status, but to active cooperation from within the Community institutions. By 1970, every major PCI foreign policy declaration addressed the question of European unification (and security) as well as the integration process. These issues were inseparable for the PCI, and marked two sides of the same coin. Hence, the one side of the PCI's Europeanism retained the necessity for a revision of the Rome Treaties. In practice, this entailed the democratic transformation of the Community via direct elections to the European Parliament.[337] The other side envisaged a united Europe achieved via a system of collective security and on the economic side, by incorporating neutral countries (Austria, Switzerland, Sweden) and socialist countries associated in the CMEA, non-aligned Socialist countries (Yugoslavia) and former dictatorships (Spain, Portugal, Greece) into the EEC.[338]

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[334] 'Tesi del XI Congresso Nazionale', 1966, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano IV 1964-1975*, p. 107.
[335] P. Togliatti, 'Yalta Memorandum', in Togliatti, *Opere Scelte*, p. 292.
[336] At the Thirteenth Congress of the PCI in 1972, Berlinguer declared that the problem of Europe and its security, the democratic transformation of the economic community has become of decisive importance, in 'Programma dei comunisti per un governo di svolta democratica', in *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer...IV 1964-1975*, p. 352.
[337] 'The Italian Communists and Europe', in *Foreign Bulletin*, January-February 1972, p. 91 and p. 105.
[338] Ibid., p. 95 and p. 102.

4.) SPD, PCI and the 'democratisation' of Community institutions

The 1957 Treaties of Rome, which set up the EEC and EURATOM, followed in the ECSC's footsteps. The High Authority was renamed 'Commission' and the Common Assembly became the 'Parliamentary Assembly'. Both Court and Assembly were common to all three bodies of the ECSC, EEC and EURATOM. The treaties had thus referred to the European Parliament (EP) as the 'Assembly'. From March 1962, the Assembly referred to itself as the EP, even though its old name was officially kept until the Single European Act of 1986. Previous proposals for direct elections to the EP had been rejected by President De Gaulle, who had been adamant towards supranationalism.

The present stage of relations between Community institutions were totally unbalanced because whereas the Commission is supposed to draft the Community programme and the Council of Ministers is the leading executive body, it is not clear what the Parliament was supposed to do.[339] Though the undemocratic nature of the EEC was not solely due to the fact that the Parliament was not elected directly, but that as a consequence of this there had been a tendency towards a too thorough concentration of powers in the hands of the Council of Ministers.[340] There was little parliamentary control to the powers of the EEC's executive organs.[341] As the largest net contributor to the EEC, Germany had a particular interest in securing a greater say in the European decision-making process. This explains demands for greater transparency with regard to decisions over the EU budget.

In the 1960s, demands for an election of the EP by universal suffrage became a widely popular demand across the political spectrum and hence, was not a particular element of the

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[339] Sassoon, 'The Italian Communist Party's European Strategy', p. 272.
[340] Ibid. p. 272.
[341] SPD (ed.), *Protokoll des SPD-Parteitages*, held in Cologne, 26 -30 May 1962 (Hannover/Bonn: Neuer Vorwärts-Verlag Nau & Co., 1962), p. 593. See also *Jahrbuch der SPD 1962/1963*, p. 24.

European policy of a certain political camp. A directly elected parliament was an explicit demand in the struggle for the democratisation process of the EEC institutions. Altering the relationship between the EP and the Community's executive organs was another essential part of this struggle. In line with their national rivals, both SPD and PCI explicitly stood for direct elections to the EP and no European policy statement failed to underline this demand.[342]

The Europeanism of the PCI involved a certain national interest: besides coming to realise the limitations of the social struggle in Italy, the choice for Europe also served to sanction the PCI's democratic legitimacy. In the PCI's enthusiasm for the EP and for the idea of direct elections, one can also see a domestic design, i.e. to gain legitimisation at the European level in order to improve the chances of the historical compromise at home. In trying to define a Western image, the PCI was compelled to partly neglect the other Western communist parties and seek contacts and convergences with European socialist parties. In this the EP provided an important platform. It would be a mistake though, to assume that this opening to European socialist parties and the quest for a European platform was purely instrumental or tactically motivated due to domestic calculations.[343] This choice for Europe developed into a profound and inherent feature of PCI identity and party programme.

5.) SPD, PCI and the enlargement of the Community of the 'Six'

The 1956 SPD party conference in Munich had already adopted a resolution calling for the extension of the Community, though it was difficult to exert much pressure on the federal government, not least in face of a general, resolute British and Scandinavian disinterest in Community participation. Even earlier, under Schumacher, SPD support of the integration

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[342] For the PCI see, for instance, Nilde Jotti, 'Elezione del Parlamento europeo a suffraggio universale diretto', in Maggiorani, Ferrari (eds), *L'Europa da Togliatti a Berlinguer*, p. 313.

[343] On this argument see also Pierre Hassner, *Eurocommunism and universal reconciliation: The international dimension of the golden dream of the PCI (1975-1979)*, No. 28, Occasional Papers, (Research Institute: The Johns Hopkins University, Bologna Center, April 1980), p. 24.

proposals were to some extent made dependent on British and Scandinavian membership. Until Britain's and Denmark's inclusion to the EEC in 1973, no SPD statement on Europe failed to reiterate this demand.[344] The SPD highly endorsed British membership (and that of other European Free Trade Association (EFTA) states who wished to join) not least for strong economic and commercial considerations.[345] This was reinforced by Schmidt from 1967 onwards and supported by German business circles.[346] There was undeniably a powerful economic component to the desire for British and Scandinavian participation. The proposed expansion of the EEC including the EFTA states with Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and Austria as members as well as Finland and Yugoslavia as associates, would strengthen the majority of the leftist-labour based parties within a unified Europe, given the strength of these parties in most EFTA countries. If the SPD viewed the Common Market as a potential movement towards European unity, British and Scandinavian membership would indeed be important towards that end. This was crucial to the SPD's overall perception of European reunification.

Despite generally favouring the enlargement of the EEC by Britain and the EFTA states, the PCI's position on British membership to the EEC was subject to controversy.[347] This is because the PCI's vision of an autonomous (from the US) Europe was in fact in direct contradiction with the support of British membership. Given British special ties with America, a Europe including Britain would automatically be more US-oriented.

In some of the literature this paradox is explained by fact that British participation would signify – in the eyes of the PCI – a positive contribution to working class participation in the

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[344] *Jahrbuch der SPD 1962/1963*, pp. 21-22 and p. 28; Willy Brandt, *Begegnungen mit Kennedy* (München: Kindler, 1964), p. 239; Brandt's government statement, 6 December 1966 in AdSD, WBA, A7, 17; Helmut Schmidt Archiv in AdSD, 1 / HS AA007555; Resolution of the SPD Party Congress held in Nuremburg, 1968, in *Jahrbuch der SPD 1968/1969*, p. 339.

[345] AdSD, 1/HS AA007555.

[346] Schneider, *Die Kunst des Kompromisses*, p. 196.

[347] For the PCI's statements on British membership to the EEC, see for instance 'Tesi del XI Congresso Nazionale', 1966, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer: La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano, IV 1964-1975*, p. 109.

integration process.[348] Then again, due to Anglo-American special ties, British inclusion would move the EEC automatically closer to the United States. This would diminish the very idea of an independent Europe as a third force or global actor. Viewed from this perspective, the PCI could have had little interest in British membership. Timmermann suggests that it was precisely because of Britain's special relations with the United States - and in order to loosen those, i.e. to tie Britain closer to Europe - that the PCI welcomed Britain in the Common Market.[349] This is plausible. The outcome of a meeting of the PCI's leading circle suggested that British membership was also endorsed to counterbalance Franco-German influence in the EEC.[350]

With 'Atlanticism' firmly imbedded in the Italian political establishment, Italian parties perceived Britain's membership in the EEC as essential to the preservation of close ties between Europe and the USA.[351] As far as European economic integration was concerned, the PCI's attitude had become marked by an ever more pronounced pragmatism in disregard of ideology. To that end, the PCI could not have done other than welcoming British application to the EEC in line with the other Italian parties.[352] Besides generally endorsing the expansion of the Community by Britain and Scandinavia, the PCI did not pay an enormous amount of interest and attention to the matter.

The PCI's initial European and détente concept (until the beginning of the 1970s) was rather Gaullist in tone and tendency. De Gaulle's détente sought the disintegration of rival blocs,

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[348] Blackmer, 'The International Strategy', p. 20.
[349] Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani*, pp. 86-89.
[350] 'Direzione del PCI', 20 September 1962, in APC, MF 026.
[351] Both PSI and DC favoured British membership to the Common Market. See Antonio Varsori, *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali dal 1943 al 1992* (Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1998), p. 149; Featherstone, *Socialist Parties and European Integration*, p. 228.
[352] Napolitano later recalled that the 'Italian left was optimistic about England's entry into the Common Market because of the influence which the labour movement has (in England) and the contribution toward strengthening the more progressive positions within the Common Market which should result from it', in G. Napolitano, *The Italian road*, p. 59.

implying ultimately the end of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and the construction of a Europe 'from the Atlantic to the Urals', a European Europe excluding America but including the USSR.[353]

The PCI's conception envisaged an independent and autonomous Europe that acted as a counterweight to, and decreased US economic influence and military presence in Western Europe. The PCI did not support European integration as a component of the Atlantic link but quite reversely, as a means to guarantee maximum autonomy and independence from American pressures on Europe and on Italy in consequence.

By the mid-1970s, the PCI envisioned a Western Europe as 'neither anti-Soviet nor anti-American'; a Europe that was no longer economically and politically dependent on the United States, but which nonetheless did not raise the issue of a political rupture or conflict with the US or the elimination of US' economic presence in Western Europe.[354]

6.) The SPD, French-German relations and the question of British membership to the EEC

As far as relations with France were concerned it has been examined that at the beginning of the 1960s, the German political class and leading CDU/CSU circles were deeply divided between 'Gaullists' and 'Atlanticists'.[355] The former supported French demands for an ever increasing European autonomy from the US, not least in the area of defence policies. This implied a rejection of Britain's application to the EEC as a result of its 'special relationship'

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[353] Irwin M. Wall, 'The United States and two Ostpolitiks. De Gaulle and Brandt', in Wilfried Loth (ed.), *The making of détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75* (Oxon: Routledge, 2008), p. 134. Rubbi held that a very similar European conception was proclaimed by Amendola. See Rubbi, *Il Mondo*, p. 31.

[354] Napolitano, *The Italian road*, p. 64.

[355] Willy Brandt, *Erinnerungen* (Hamburg: Spiegel-Verlag, 2006/2007), pp. 246-247; Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 214.

with Washington. In the CDU this group was associated with Chancellor Adenauer. Those 'Atlanticists' around Ludwig Erhard and Gerhard Schröder thought of the USA as the most important ally and consequently supported Britain's membership at the earliest possible stage. Erhard certainly had strong economic interests on the national agenda.[356]

Somewhat ironically, the images of the CDU and the SPD with regard to Europe and the integration aspect had significantly reversed from 1960 onwards. The SPD fostered its image as a pro-European party, carefully balancing relations with the US and French power-policy interests. The desire for close relations with France on the one hand and dependency on the United States (especially on the security/military shield) on the other caused an increasingly pronounced foreign policy dilemma for the SPD at the beginning of the 1960s. This is certainly a little ironic considering the fact that the SPD had only just committed to the Atlantic Alliance as a main pillar of Germany's foreign policy.

The SPD was increasingly suspicious of Adenauer's close euro-political cooperation with de Gaulle and French ideas for Europe. In essence, the SPD rejected the French leader's concept as detrimental to the European cause. A party statement issued in September 1960 objected de Gaulle's European construction with its puppet parliament and exclusion of Great Britain.[357] Instead, the SPD strongly advocated British membership to the EEC which was incompatible with de Gaulle's vision of a French-dominated Europe detached from the United States. De Gaulle's attempt to steer a course more independent of the US ran counter to the SPD's vision for a united Europe and its very idea of transatlantic partnership. Against this background the SPD critically observed the beginning of French-German negotiations over the Fouchet-Plan, as the building of a political union would further the already existing rift with the EFTA states. This would imply an additional impediment to true European unity, which was

[356] Erhard had always endorsed the idea of promoting European integration in form of a free trade area. This made him a naturally ally of British economic interests.
[357] Marcowitz, *Option für Paris?*, p. 91.

unthinkable without Britain and the Scandinavian countries. This illustrated to what extent the SPD had by now come to endorse the European project and sought to promote its image and responsible nature as a party of true European unity. Key to this was the close and unequivocal relation with the American ally. Though friendly relations with Germany's Western neighbours and France in particular were important, this could not be achieved at the expense of relations with the transatlantic partner, as de Gaulle's plans would, without doubt, have implied.[358] After all, one has to bear in mind that the SPD's relations with the United States were particularly strong at the time of the special Brandt-Kennedy bond.

In choosing between an 'Atlantic' or 'Gaullist' orientation for Europe, the SPD supported Kennedy's idea of a European-Atlantic partnership.[359] This, in practice, entailed close relations with the US. Many Social Democrats were impressed by the new style leadership of Kennedy and deeply sceptic about the practical implications of de Gaulle's European vision. In November 1962, Erich Ollenhauer and Herbert Wehner strongly advocated a joint action programme with other European Socialists, which envisaged a 'European political and supranational system', open to new members and in close alliance with the US.[360]

The SPD believed that proper European unity depended on participation of both Britain and France. As much as the party believed in Franco-German reconciliation after the war, and France's belonging to the community institutions, the SPD was not willing to pay the price of friendship with France at the expense of British membership. The same applied to SPD-French divergences over the future organisational structure of the Atlantic Alliance. The underlying assumption was that no German government could entirely sacrifice relations with

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[358] Marcowitz even argued that the SPD geared primarily towards the US since its foreign policy U-turn in 1960. This implied that its European policy and relations with the European allies were subordinated to this; in ibid., p. 97.

[359] SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1962/1963*, p. 22; SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1964/1965*, p. 53; SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1966/1967*, p. 275.

[360] Marcowitz, *Option für Paris?*, p. 95.

the US and NATO to favour relations with France.[361] The SPD was also rather sceptic of de Gaulle's motivations and of the geopolitical benefits of Franco-German relations. De Gaulle's rejection of Britain's membership to the EEC was therefore seen by the SPD as the most salient setback on the integration process thus far.[362] This severely complicated French-German reconciliation in the eyes of many Social Democrats.[363]

As far as the Élysée-treaty was concerned, the SPD insisted on a specific preamble to the Franco-German treaty of 1963 reaffirming support for both the EEC and NATO.[364] The SPD's position on the Élysée-treaty illustrated the party's rejection of French-German special ties, particularly if these would sacrifice relations with the US or British membership. The underlying idea was a united Europe - including Britain, Scandinavia and all EFTA states interested to participate - which would engage in a special transatlantic partnership. At the time, this was of course not feasible and would meet French resistance.

Differences of opinion and policy divergences existed between the SPD and France above all, over the debate on European integration (enlargement, supra-nationalism) and the organisational structure of NATO.[365] In 1966, de Gaulle took French forces out of NATO's integrated command. His ambitions, however, went further; he hoped to set an example that would induce other members of the Atlantic Alliance to abolish military integration in 1969, that is, by the time of the renewal of the military treaty.[366]

Divergences were confined to the period of de Gaulle's leadership. After de Gaulle's defeat in April 1969 and the taking over of presidency by Georges Pompidou, relations improved rapidly and significantly.

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[361] Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe*, p. 198.
[362] SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1962/1963*, p. 17.
[363] Schönhoven, *Wendejahre*, p. 32. In his analysis Schönhoven highlighted the mediating role the SPD had taken on in overcoming French-British differences; see also pp. 413-419.
[364] The Élysée-treaty, treaty of friendship, was concluded between Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer in 1963. For the SPD's position on the treaty see SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1962/1963*, p. 17.
[365] Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 253.
[366] Laurent Cesari, 'France and NATO from 1966 to 1976', in Wilfried Loth (ed.), *The making of détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75* (Oxon: Routledge, 2008), p. 91.

Chapter 5

PCI and SPD relations with the Communist bloc, 1960-1979

1.) The reappraisal of the SPD's policy towards the East and the development of a 'new' Ostpolitik

The building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 did not mark the starting point for a strategic reappraisal, but accelerated the formulation of a new and reversed policy towards the East. Conversely, the actual roots of the SPD's Ostpolitik may not, as some have asserted[367], be found in the construction of the Wall. Many of the ideas that later characterised the SPD's Ostpolitik had already been existent in the 1950s. Some of its early features and theoretical foundations were then elaborated upon in the 1960s and developed into a new Ostpolitik. The erection of the Wall only further strengthened some of the positions that had been hitherto dismissed and rendered a policy reappraisal indispensable. It demonstrated that it was necessary to think in terms of a much longer time scale, realising that there could not be a solution to Germany's division unconnected with the wider evolution of East-West relations. The German problem had ceased to be solely a national problem. Certainly, one needs to be careful as to distinguish between a fully thought out new policy and its practical steps, and one that had already been partly existent and had subsequently laid the theoretical background for the development of Ostpolitik in the 1960s. The existing literature is divided between those who wish to prove that Brandt had already developed the conceptual basis of Ostpolitik prior to 1961 (Wolfgang Schmidt's *Kalter Krieg, Koexistenz und kleine Schritte*)[368] and those who put more emphasis on the impact of the Berlin Wall and Kennedy's German policy on Brandt. Hence they trace the concept of Ostpolitik more to the post-1961 era by arguing that

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[367] For example, Frank Fischer, *Im deutschen Interesse. Die Ostpolitik der SPD von 1969 bis 1989* (Husum: Matthiesen Verlag, 2001), p. 42.

[368] See also Niedhart who argued that the original concept of Ostpolitik, as distinct from practical steps and operational policy, dates from the 1950s. Niedhart, 'The East-West Problem as seen from Berlin: Willy Brandt's Early Ostpolitik', in Wilfried Loth (ed.), *Europe, Cold War and Coexistence, 1953-1965* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 286.

the Kennedy years were pivotal for the emergence of détente and SPD thinking (Arne Hofmann's *The Emergence of Détente in Europe. Brandt, Kennedy, and the formation of Ostpolitik*).

The two notions are not necessarily exclusive or incompatible and both provide an understanding of the evolution of the SPD's Ostpolitik. Viewed exclusively, the former tends to deny any substantial development during the early to mid-1960s by relating the roots of Brandt's thinking almost entirely to the 1950s. The opposing notion ignores the experience of Brandt and Reuter and the Berlin crises on the formation and specification of Brandt's Ostpolitik by overemphasising the impact of the Berlin Wall and the special Kennedy-Brandt relation on the formation of Ostpolitik. To fully comprehend the evolution of Ostpolitik, one needs to understand the pre- and post-1961 period, thus the early conceptual ideas and Kennedy's designs without denying or failing to acknowledge the mutual influence and impact of one or the other. Hofmann, quite correctly, pointed out that Brandt's thinking was by no means completed or predetermined by 1963. The end of the 'pass agreements', Brandt's experience as Foreign Minister, the Ulbricht doctrine and the Cambodian crisis, Bahr's work in the Foreign Office planning staff, the notion of a 'European peace order', the blueprint for the treaty system and the security dimension of Ostpolitik were all yet to come, as were the declared readiness to enter into full diplomatic relations with Eastern Europe, to recognise the Oder-Neisse border and drop the Hallstein doctrine.[369]

Willy Brandt's reactions to the construction of the Berlin Wall and his subsequent policy of small steps, which henceforth characterised inner-German relations,[370] were thus in part also based on his earlier ideas and perceptions. Forced by the harsh reality of events during the Berlin crisis (or in fact the many Berlin crises) leading up to the erection of the Wall (as well

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[369] Hofmann, *The Emergence*, p. 176.
[370] 'Auszug aus der Erklärung der SPD-Regierungsmannschaft', 8 January 1965, in AdSD, WBA, Publikationen, Mappe 199.

as the memory of the Berlin blockade of 1948), Brandt continuously insisted to take into account the particular situation of Berlin and that the German problem was strongly intertwined with international affairs, European security, disarmament and East-West relations in general.[371]

Before becoming governing mayor of Berlin (1957-1966), Brandt had been more favourable towards integration with the West and did not see it hindering reunification, as many of the SPD officials in Bonn in fact had done. Due to his experiences in Berlin, Brandt had given much concern to the living conditions of the people in the Western sector of Berlin and those in the GDR.[372] Under the influence of West Berlin's first governing Mayor, Ernst Reuter (from 1948-1953), Brandt focused on the political defence of West Berlin in the Cold War and uncharacteristically for a social democrat, became decidedly pro-American in the process. Thus, according to him, like his predecessor Reuter, integration with the West would not necessarily contradict the reunification line. Brandt believed that only European and international détente, without the inclusion of the German question, would ultimately pave the way for improvements in inner-German relations. At the 1956 Party Congress of the SPD, motions were forwarded that favoured direct negotiations between Bonn and East Berlin.[373] These, however, remained minority positions in the 1950s. In 1959/60 the federal SPD had still assumed that only by resolving the German issue first could an enduring international relaxation of tension be reached.[374]

A policy change at the national level occurred only in 1960, when international circumstances had substantially changed, disfavouring German reunification at the current stage. After the failure of a number of successive conferences and meetings between the former Allies, it had

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[371] 'Vermerk zur Berlinfrage', 27 June 1960, in Willy Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Berlin bleibt frei. Politik in und für Berlin 1947-1966*, Vol. 3 (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 2004), p. 302.
[372] Willy Brandt, 'The East-West Problem as seen from Berlin', *International Affairs*, Vol. 34 (1958), pp. 301-302.
[373] Kleßmann, 'Sozialdemokratie und deutsche Frage', p. 47.
[374] W. Schmidt, *Kalter Krieg*, p. 541.

become increasingly apparent that the Soviet Union did not desire the much hoped for reunification, and was reluctant (as much as the United States) to alter the present status quo.[375] The SPD's Deutschland Plan, as discussed in chapter three, intended to offer a final solution to the German question on neutral grounds. In March 1960, Wehner declared that a direct path to German reunification had become ever more unlikely.[376] It has been argued that the Deutschland Plan was arduously justified throughout 1959, even if Wehner and many in the SPD had realised by October 1959 that it would in fact prove to be entirely fruitless.[377]

The SPD had repudiated its former policy of neutralism as the chosen road to reunification in June 1960, opting for a bi-partisan foreign policy course together with the leading CDU/CSU. The SPD's policy reappraisal had been proclaimed by Herbert Wehner almost single-handedly, without much prior consultation in parliament on 30 June 1960.[378] It was intended to minimise the foreign policy differences between the two main parties and pave the way for future governmental cooperation.

As argued before, it would be oversimplified to assert that the SPD's acceptance of NATO and the Federal Republic's membership in the Atlantic Alliance simply marked the foreign policy equivalent of Bad Godesberg, and hence presented its logical conclusion in the foreign policy field. Whereas the timing may speak in favour of a connection with Bad Godesberg, it was nonetheless also a product of altered international circumstances. The process to Bad Godesberg had been discussed at lengths within the party and put to a vote at an extraordinary party congress. The occurrence of the foreign policy shift - and a change of the SPD's

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[375] For example, the foreign minister conferences of the four powers in May and December 1959.
[376] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 230.
[377] Ibid., p. 229.
[378] Wehner, 'Plädoyer für eine gemeinsame Politik', speech in German parliament on 30 June 1960, in Wehner, *Wandel und Bewährung*, p. 240.

operational strategy was much more sudden. Had it been discussed in the party or at an executive level before, it would have caused a lasting debate, as Bahr later recalled.[379]

The Cold War attitude of the 1950s had been replaced by a more realistic assessment of the international constellation and a more flexible response to the post-war realities. Germany's peculiarity was of course that the country's outstanding unresolved domestic problem was also a major international issue. It is also crucial to bear in mind that due to Germany's geostrategic position, the FRG was, more than any other Western European country, absorbed in the difficult process of finding the right balance between détente and military defence.

Since German reunification on neutral grounds was neither desirable by the superpowers nor a feasible option given the proximity of the Soviet military presence, 'all' Western Germany could do was to engage in open communication with the East.[380] The guiding principles of the newly developing approach towards the East were peaceful coexistence (as established by the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956) combined by political, economic and cultural exchange. Especially after the building of the Wall, the priorities of the SPD's political agenda were the easing of tensions in order to find practical solutions to some of the most pressing humanitarian and economic problems (access to the West, traffic, postal issues etc.) caused by the country's division.[381] None of this could of course have been realised from within the parliamentary opposition. The SPD needed to abandon its constant policy of intransigent opposition and embark on a course of foreign policy convergences with the leading CDU/CSU. The acceptance of Germany's international and military obligations was thus a prerequisite for any advancement towards potential coalition partners in order to ultimately achieve governmental responsibility.

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[379] See, for example, Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, pp. 278-279.
[380] See also Niedhart, 'The East-West Problem', p. 286.
[381] 'Kundgebungen und Beschlüsse des Parteitages von Köln', 1962, in SPD (ed.), *SPD Jahrbuch 1962/1963*, p. 456. See also Interview with W. Brandt, *Der Spiegel*, No. 1-2 (10 January 1962), pp. 30-34.

To start with, it is important to stress that one must not speak of *one* coherent German Ostpolitik. The existing manifold literature on the SPD's Ostpolitik or the FRG's Ostpolitik often distinguishes between 'Ostpolitik' (1950s) and 'new Ostpolitik' (1960s).[382] This presupposes that there existed a party specific Ostpolitik in the 1950s. Here I will suggest that no such Eastern policy was developed in the 1950s. On the contrary, policies towards the East were volatile and more often than not a reaction to events in the East. It is therefore more appropriate to speak of Ostpolitik in the 1960s, and a 'second' or 'new' Ostpolitik in the 1980s.

The policies towards the East were the central element of West German foreign policy in general, yet perceptions of strategies towards the East largely diverged between the CDU/CSU and SPD. Until the late 1960s, West German policy towards Eastern Europe had been dominated by the Hallstein Doctrine, which pointed to the lack of democratic legitimacy and the overbearing role of the Soviet occupation power. The Federal Republic (followed in this by her allies) refused to recognise the GDR, denied its statehood and claimed to be the sole legitimate representative of all Germans.[383] It also refused to recognise East Germany's Oder-Neisse border with Poland, and with it the loss of Germany's Eastern territories after the war. This position precluded diplomatic relations with all of Eastern Europe and left minimal scope for any West German policy towards the East.

In the course of the 1960s, when the monolithism of the Warsaw Pact (and the Soviet leading role in it) had been more openly questioned, the Hallstein Doctrine became increasingly obsolete.

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[382] Niedhart, 'Ostpolitik and its impact', p. 119.
[383] Named after Walter Hallstein, State Secretary of the West German Federal Foreign Office (1951-1958).

The SPD's Ostpolitik (as distinct from that of the CDU/CSU) was originally conceived as a German contribution to détente that was compatible with and fully accounted for Germany's specific national interests, a policy which was made possible as a result of the international realities in the 1960s. The United States saw in it a possibility (perhaps the only) to diminish the newly established nuclear potential of the Soviet Union, which would give Washington enough leverage to overcome the disaster in Vietnam. The USSR, under Brezhnev, was so concerned with the severe ideological tensions in its own sphere of influence (dispute with China, the Prague Spring) that a combination of military parity, closer economic cooperation with the West as a result of a more active (peaceful) coexistence, would provide the Soviet Union with additional legitimisation vis-à-vis the Warsaw Pact states, and promised to consolidate the status quo of the territorial disputes resulting from the Second World War.[384]

After 1961 the SPD's central aim was to develop and implement a realistic policy towards the East, based on the given post-war realities. One reality after the building of the Berlin Wall was that the division might exist for an unforeseeable period of time. If it was impossible to remove the Wall, the aim was to make it more penetrable and to improve the living conditions of the people in Berlin and East Germany.[385] This was the starting point in the SPD's calculation. In 1964 Willy Brandt declared that reunification could only be achieved in the context of far-reaching changes in East-West relations in general, which, in turn, could only be attained through improved and normalised relations with the Soviet Union.[386] It was realised that the German problem was no longer a 'national issue', but had a European and international dimension and could only be at the end of a process of small steps.[387]

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[384] See also Fischer, *Im deutschen Interesse*, p. 30.
[385] Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, p. 161.
[386] Willy Brandt, 'Grundgedanken deutscher Außenpolitik', speech on 11 June 1964, in AdSD, WBA, Publikationen, Mappe 182.
[387] Bahr, *Sicherheit für und vor Deutschland* (München, Wien: Carl Hanser, 1991), p. 13.

The features of a more flexible approach towards the East were advocated since the early 1960s, and were formalised at the 1968 Party Congress of the SPD.[388] In his speech, Brandt declared that Germany's reunification was not on the SPD's (immediate) international political agenda (although this by no means signified that it no longer represented the party's long-term goal), but it was replaced by a more realistic approach based on the assumption that the GDR may in fact exist for an indefinite period of time.[389] Since the German problem was strongly interrelated with the European development in general, the SPD henceforth concentrated on the 'improvement of the present climate of distrust, tension and conflict'.[390] The SPD had realised that a general rapprochement with the East required Bonn's formal acceptance of the status quo. By recognising the territorial and political realities stemming from the Second World War, the SPD developed a more realistic and constructive approach to the East, and attuned West German foreign policy to the dynamics of East-West détente (as we will examine later, a more realistic foreign policy approach was developed by the PCI in the late 1960s). Bonn hoped to increasingly widen its margin of manoeuvre at an international level by contributing to improve relations with the East and thereby towards a general relaxation of tensions. The recognition of the post-war borders, in particular the Oder-Neisse line, the recognition of the existence of two German states as well as the signing of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, had also been identified as prerequisites for talks by the

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[388] There exists a discrepancy amongst historians about who was the main strategic thinker of the SPD's new foreign policy orientation and Eastern concept. Some attribute this role to Egon Bahr, Brandt's close advisor, who undoubtedly had an essential impact on the SPD's new foreign policy course. See also Karsten Schröder, *Egon Bahr* (Rastatt: Verlag Arthur Moewig, 1988), p. 133. Others argue that Herbert Wehner was the essential strategic mind behind the SPD's foreign policy. See, for example, Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 230. It needs to be stressed, however, that Wehner was often identified more with the SPD's German policy of the 1950s. See Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 230. Bahr was certainly one of the most influential practitioners, strategists and ideologists of Ostpolitik from the early 1960s. In the literature his role in Ostpolitik is mainly attributed to the theoretical foundations of Ostpolitik and the first phase of 1969-1972. It should be noted that his influence went well beyond that and was not limited to the SPD's first phase in Ostpolitik; see also Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name. Germany and the divided Continent* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1993), p. 18.

[389] Willy Brandt, speech at the SPD Party Congress , 17-21 March 1968 in Nuremburg, in SPD (ed.), *Parteitag der SPD 1968* (Hannover / Bonn: Neuer-Vorwärts Verlag Nau & Co., 1968), p. 92.

[390] Brandt, 'German Policy toward the East', *Foreign Affairs*, April 1968, re-printed in AdSD, WBA, Mappe 275.

conference of Communist parties held at Karlovy Vary in 1967[391], and all of which had been subject of talks between the SPD and the Italian Communists in 1967/68.

It is a commonality of political parties in general that they continue to respond overwhelmingly to national electorates. One therefore needs to also bear in mind that the abandonment of German reunification as a possibility in the short term was, as Sassoon put it, made possible by changes in public opinion. In 1964, reunification was the most salient 'foreign' affairs issue, with 41 percent of respondents regarding it as 'the most important question facing Germany today'.[392] In January 1965, this percentage had risen to 47 percent. By January 1967, respondents considered economic problems, salaries, prices and the currency as considerably more important (62 percent) and reunification, at 18 percent, was regarded as the most outstanding question facing West Germany (it is also very interesting to note that the importance of the Berlin problem dropped from 11 percent (1963) to 1 percent (1967).[393] By the late 1960s, the economy was perceived as more important, and a general anxiety concerning Germany's probable obliteration in case of a world conflict was of central relevance to the electorate.[394]

The SPD attempted to construct a new and innovative social-democratic foreign policy which in itself presented a particular and active contribution to détente in Europe. The rationale behind this would give West Germany a greater say in international affairs and contribute to the external emancipation of the Federal Republic (much as the treaties with the West had

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[391] *L'Unità*, 'La dichiarazione di Karlovy Vary per la pace e la sicurezza europea', 28 April 1967. See also 'I compiti attuali della lotta antimperialista e l'Unità d'azione dei partiti comunisti e operai, di tutte le forze antimperialiste' (Preparatory Document of the International Conference of Communist Parties, held in Moscow, 19-22 March 1969), in Central Committee 1969, in APC, MF 006.

[392] *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung 1965-1967*, Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (ed.) (Allensbach, Bonn: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1967), p. 387.

[393] It is worth noting that these figures were not least an expression of the economic downturn in 1966/67. Further to this was the concern of an increasing unemployment rate: the figure increased from 0.7 percent to 2.1 percent, which was the highest amount since 1959. See Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 254. See also *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung 1965-1967*, p. 387.

[394] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 331.

done in the 1950s). The establishment of a distinctive (and widely accepted) social democratic foreign policy was also a novelty in much of Western Europe, as post-war foreign policies were often formulated and exclusive to conservative or centre-right parties (for instance, France and Italy). As we will establish later, the Italian Communists were also engaged in a process of developing a distinctive foreign policy as a national communist party.

In Germany, the SPD was not the only party to be confronted with and adapt to a new set of international circumstances as well as alterations in public opinion. The FDP, when forced in opposition during the period of CDU/CSU-SPD governmental cooperation (1966-1969), had also distanced itself completely from the FRG's claim that it alone represented all Germans.[395] Legally, the SPD was unwilling to accept and recognise the GDR as a fully sovereign state[396] ('even if two states exist in Germany, they are not foreigners to one another; their relations to one another can only be of a special status'[397]), but Brandt and the majority of the SPD agreed to the *de facto* (and not *de jure*!) acceptance of an East German state. It was an indefinite arrangement or compromise open to diverse understanding (depending on the interpretation of whichever side) between the former claim of West Germany's status of sole representation and the East German demand for a two-state solution.[398] Its sole purpose was to clear the way towards negotiations and coming to inner-German agreements.

Again, if opinion polls were to be believed, the percentage of West Germans who favoured the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line as Germany's border with the East rose remarkably during this period: in February 1966 it amounted to 27 percent (compare with 54 percent

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[395] Wilfried Loth, *Overcoming the Cold War. A History of Détente, 1950-1991* (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 104.

[396] Willy Brandt, 'Regierungserklärung vor dem Deutschen Bundestag', 28 October 1969, in *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, Stenographische Berichte, 6. Wahlperiode, 5. Sitzung, Bd., 71, pp. 20-34, re-printed in Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Ein Volk der guten Nachbarn. Außen- und Deutschlandpolitik 1966-1974*, Vol. 6 (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 2005), p. 237; see also SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1968/1969*, p. 340.

[397] Ibid.

[398] See also Schönhoven, *Wendejahre*, p. 393.

against)[399], whereas by November 1967 it had risen to 47 percent.[400] The debate about the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line as Germany's border to the East was, however, not accepted by the SPD parliamentary faction unanimously, especially not by SPD delegates that had their roots in those areas.[401] Most probably it was ultimately agreed upon in order to open negotiations with the East.[402]

2.) The PCI and the international communist movement in the 1960s

The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956, the process of de-Stalinisation and the Soviet green light for national roads to socialism (which in practise implicitly undermined the role of the Soviet Union as the sole legitimate guiding-state within the international communist movement, or so it was understood) had given new impetus to serious elaboration and implementation of an Italian national road to socialism. Soon after, the limits of this newly granted autonomy were forcefully demonstrated by the Soviet invasion in Hungary in October that year. At that point, PCI loyalty vis-à-vis the Soviet Union was given priority over national interests and the invasion was justified uncritically as a 'painful necessity'.[403]

Nonetheless, the PCI embarked on a process of emancipation within the international communist movement, increasing its independence and autonomy vis-à-vis Moscow. At the same time, the Italian Communists avoided rupture, open criticism of the Soviet Union, and thereby any critical assessment of the Soviet system itself. The relations with the Soviet Union and within the international communist movement could only be, so said PCI officials, of a certain nature: they were characterised by 'unity in diversity'. To that end, the PCI asserted the principles of autonomy and independence of each communist party in pursuing

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[399] *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung 1965-1967*, p. 411.
[400] Wilkens, 'New Ostpolitik', p. 71.
[401] Parliamentary faction meeting, 22 February 1972, in AdSD, SPD-Bundestagsfraktion, 6.WP, Signatur 87.
[402] In his memoirs Willy Brandt stressed that German-Polish reconciliation was to be of equal importance as German-French friendly relations in the West. See Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 178.
[403] Giancarlo Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto. Budapest, Praga, Varsavia* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1982), p. 103.

their national roads to socialism, recognising the different national circumstances, and refused a return to centralised forms of direction or a necessity to formulate mutual ideas and standards as had been characteristic of the movement in the past.[404] During Togliatti's leadership and in the aftermath of his death in 1964, solidarity and adherence to the international communist movement were still something that the Italian Communists considered important.[405] Between 1956 and 1968, the PCI's loyalty to the CPSU had been genuine, but limited. 'Unity' was demonstrated whenever necessary (i.e. Hungary, in the Sino-Soviet split), but it was henceforth ever more evident that allegiance to Soviet foreign policy interests and identification with the Soviet system ran counter PCI domestic policy ambitions.

The function of a party's international positions is often also a direct reflection of its domestic policy objectives. This has been even more so the case with the PCI. With the beginning of the 1960s, the PCI found itself gradually more isolated in the national political arena. The beginning of the 1960s saw the birth of the first centre-left experiment (by incorporating the PSI in the area of government), which marked a devastating blow to the PCI as it permanently lost the PSI as an ally. Toward the mid-1960s the PSI also began to make overtures to the Social Democrats with whom they eventually – albeit shortly – reunited until 1969. All this contributed to a profound revision of some of the PCI's former positions. Nonetheless, the PCI's concept of 'unity in diversity' was, in the 1960s, still loose and was only given new context after the Czech crisis of 1968, when the PCI adopted a more critical presence within the international communist movement, fully embracing its notion of total autonomy of all parties, and dismissed any right to intervene in the affairs of another party or state.

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[404] Togliatti, Central Committee, 24 October 1963, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Movimento Operaio Internazionale (subsequently MOI), Fascicolo 5.
[405] See also Blackmer, *Unity in Diversity*, p. 383.

A considerable moment of tension in the international communist movement arose between the Soviets and the Chinese at the conference of 81 communist parties held in Moscow in November 1960. On this occasion, the Chinese communist leadership presented itself as the main defender of an intransigent tendency which opted for a re-launching of a form of ideological orthodoxy, an open anti-imperialistic challenge and aspired leadership of the international communist movement.[406]

The PCI's posture in the Sino-Soviet dispute was marked by contradictions: on the one hand, it was opposed to the substance of the Chinese line – that the war was inevitable and against the strategy of peaceful coexistence[407] – and considered the Chinese positions essentially as wrong.[408] However, on the other hand the PCI vigorously objected the 'excommunication' of the Chinese from the international communist movement, thereby intending to preserve the (somewhat artificial) unity of the movement. In light of this, Longo declared that 'one must discard, as "bad and dangerous", every procedure that may lead to a deepening of the present divisions and ruptures, such as might be, the convocation in the moment and conditions of a new international conference of the working class and communist parties'.[409] The PCI objected a new conference as intended to excommunicate the Chinese and restore past norms of the movement. The PCI leadership of course realised that the Sino-Soviet dispute was itself a reflection and inescapable consequence of the by then polycentric system. To this end, the PCI came to the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that unity (of the movement) must be preserved, but could not be enforced from above (Soviet Union) and that only by allowing for its diversity could the international communist system be maintained in the long-term. The underlying idea was: unity was necessary (i.e. for a united struggle against the imperialist

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[406] Silvio Pons, 'The Italian Communist Party between East and West, 1960-64', in Loth (ed.), *Europe, Cold War and Coexistence*, p. 99.
[407] Longo, Direzione del PCI, 9 December 1960, in APC, MF 024.
[408] Togliatti, Central Committee, 24 October 1963, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, MOI, Fascicolo 5.
[409] Longo's report on domestic policy to the Central Committee, 20 October 1965, *Foreign Bulletin*, No. 4 (October-December 1965), p. 16.

enemy) and needed to be preserved, but unity could only be possible and genuine if accompanied by autonomy of all parties with respect to national decisions.

The PCI's position on Moscow's rift with the Chinese was of course a mere reflection of the PCI's own struggle and ambiguous relations with the international communist system. The PCI's resistance was motivated not only by an unwillingness to see the Chinese expelled from the movement, but mainly by the concern that the Soviets used the occasion to restore the norms of the past with regard to inter-party relations within the movement and a return to obedience to a single-party guide.[410]

3.) SPD-PCI relations and Ostpolitik: the PCI in search for an international reference point

Both SPD and PCI were fundamentally interested in the development of détente. It is therefore particularly interesting that a historical comparison addresses the question of relations between the two. This is revealing for three reasons. First of all, it is a previously under-researched area. Secondly, the encounters between the two disclose remarkable insights in the parties' motivations and thirdly, my research findings challenge previously done research in this field.

For national reasons the PCI had a great interest in reducing the existing bloc confrontation and constructively contributing to Ostpolitik. This engagement was unique amongst Western European communist parties. Italian political parties have always tended to search for external legitimisation to consolidate national positions (the DC, for instance, held close ties with the US). In the course of the PCI's foreign policy revisionism (and development of its national road policy) it henceforth wished to engage in, it was of particular importance to somewhat

[410] Blackmer, 'The International Strategy', p. 14.

qualify the organic links with the Soviet Union and find new international reference points that solidified its national standing and assured the PCI national and international legitimisation. The PCI's domestic strategy and its foreign policy concept went hand in hand. Much like the SPD, the PCI had a specific national interest in détente, and a relaxation of tension between the two German states was seen as an important contribution towards that end.

If, following the PCI rationale, the bloc confrontation was a severe and perhaps the strongest impediment for an Italian road to socialism, this rigidity of superpower tension had to be minimised and overcome. This, in turn, was hoped to reduce international and internal hostilities against domestic alliances with the PCI. The 'German problem' was both the outcome and expression of Cold War hostilities at the heart of Europe. The SPD's Ostpolitik seemed promising to contribute to East-West détente. At the same time, so the PCI's logic, this would pave the way for multilateral tasks and the much desired convocation of a Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). This could play an important role in overcoming the military blocs.[411] The SPD, in contrast, had stressed that though it was desirable, it could not be held without a prior improvement of inner-German relations. Otherwise the conference would be dominated by the German conflict.[412] Hence, the PCI also had a strong interest in a resolution of the German dispute. Interestingly, both SPD and PCI, in developing their 'own national roads' in foreign policy terms, held common comparable perceptions of the East-West problem and sought solutions to untangle the rigidity of the military blocs and Cold War tensions that were remarkably similar.

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[411] Novella, 'Report to the Foreign Policy Commission of the Central Committee', *Foreign Bulletin*, No. 2-3 (March-June 1973), p. 64.
[412] Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 183.

Dialogue between the SPD and the PCI had commenced in the autumn of 1967. This was something quite sensational at the time, since the SPD only held official contacts with the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and in Germany, the Communist Party was still banned.[413] Here I intend to challenge Timmermann, who argues that the initiative came from the PCI.[414] Research findings from PCI archives suggest the opposite: the initial request for a private meeting came from the SPD.[415] This is more likely given the SPD's underlying interest behind these talks: to pave the way for talks with the SED and ultimately Moscow.

The PCI served as a 'mediator', communicating the SPD's positions with the Soviet leadership and the East German regime. Bahr recalled that the SPD was interested in transmitting an authentic picture of its policies to Moscow, so that the Soviets not only relied on hostile reports from East Berlin on what the SPD's intentions were.[416] The SED had been equally hostile towards the great coalition than towards the previous coalitions and dismissed the SPD's new Ostpolitik as a mere continuation of Adenauer's foreign policy.[417] By choosing the PCI as a mediator, the SPD hoped to challenge, so Leo Bauer, Brandt's close advisor, affirmed, the 'exclusivity of the SED's version and interpretation of the great coalition's Ostpolitik'.[418]

An initial informal meeting was held in Bonn on 20 September 1967 between Alberto Jacoviello and some German journalists, one of which was Günter Markscheffel.[419] Later

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[413] See Ehmke, *Mittendrin. Von der Großen Koalition zur Deutschen Einheit* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1994), p. 255.
[414] See, *I Comunisti italiani*, p. 25.
[415] See letter from Alberto Jacoviello (foreign policy editor of *L'Unità*) to Luigi Longo, 17 October 1967, in APC, MF 0545.
[416] Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, p. 251. See also Leo Bauer, in APC, MF 0552.
[417] Carlo Galluzzi, *Togliatti, Longo, Berlinguer* (Milano: Sperling & Kupfer Editori, 1989), p. 93.
[418] As quoted by Merseburger, *Willy Brandt*, pp. 540-541. See also Schönhoven, *Wendejahre*, p. 398.
[419] Günter Markscheffel was editor in chief of the SPD official press from 1957 to 1970; Carlo Galluzzi, 'Nota per l'ufficio politico', in APC, MF 0545.

Brandt sent Bauer to Rome to continue talks with PCI officials.[420] The choice of Jacoviello and Bauer to initiate talks was both interesting and illustrative. Brandt decided to trust his friend Bauer, a former communist, with the task and the PCI had sent Jacoviello a more reform-minded Italian Communist, to establish the basis for further meetings. Later. the two parties' delegations were composed of Berlinguer, Galluzzi and Segre on the Italian side and Egon Franke, Leo Bauer and Fried Wesemann on behalf of the SPD.[421] After initial talks, Egon Bahr also attended meetings.[422] The precise amount of SPD-PCI meetings in this initial phase of Ostpolitik is difficult to establish. Allegedly, at least 15 meetings were held in 1967/68.[423] Issues discussed during those meetings were European détente and security, the overcoming of the military blocs and a European security system, the German problem (acceptance of pre-war borders etc.) and a renewed legality of the German Communist Party (KPD), which had been unconstitutional since 1956.[424] Neither SPD nor PCI were particularly interested in the KPD. Nonetheless, the foundation of a new party was an important 'by-product' of these meetings in as far as it was a concession vis-à-vis the SED on a long-standing demand. Both SPD and PCI negotiated means to enable the renewed foundation of the KPD under a different name.[425] The SED dropped its former demand of a re-establishment of the old KPD and eventually agreed to a newly founded communist party.[426] This process was not only actively supported but made partly possible by Gustav Heinemann, the SPD's minister of justice.[427]

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[420] Bauer had only come to West Germany in 1955. In the 1960s, he was editor for the German weekly *Stern*. Later he became one of Brandt's closest advisors. Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 182. See also APC, MF 0545.
[421] Sergio Segre had previously been correspondent of *L'Unità* in East-Berlin, was married to a German and spoke the language fluently. In 1970, Segre became head of the International Department of the PCI. Fried Wesemann was the information director of the SPD Party Executive and one of Brandt's policy advisors at the time. See APC, MF 0545.
[422] Interview with Egon Bahr, 1 June 2007. See also Egon Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, p. 251.
[423] P. Brandt, J. Schumacher, G. Schwarzrock, K. Sühl, *Karrieren eines Außenseiters. Leo Bauer zwischen Kommunismus und Sozialdemokratie 1912 bis 1972* (Bonn: Dietz, 1983), pp. 287-288.
[424] Notes on PCI-SPD meetings see APC, MF 0545.
[425] See letter from Carlo Galluzzi to Luigi Longo, APC, MF 0545.
[426] Merseburger, *Willy Brandt*, p. 543.
[427] Merseburger attributed particular importance to the foundation of a new communist party as an outcome of SPD-PCI talks, ibid., pp. 543-544.

Following initial meetings between the SPD and PCI, the Italian Communists commenced talks with SED officials. In December 1967, Galluzzi and Segre travelled to East Berlin, and in February 1968 a delegation of the SED's Central Committee continued talks in Rome.[428] The composition of the PCI's delegation expressed the importance the PCI attributed to these meetings. The delegation consisted of Galluzzi and Segre (both attended meetings with the SPD), Colombi and Cossutta (members of the PCI's *Direzione*), as well as party leader Luigi Longo and Pietro Ingrao.[429]

The SPD gave more weight to the reform course of the PCI, than for example statements made by the PCF. Moreover, the PCI's mere size and role in post-war Italy ascribed it a particular importance. The party observed the opening to the East with the greatest curiosity and apprehension and hoped to assume an active role in the détente process. The meetings with the SPD served this purpose.[430] PCI archival sources manifest that the maximum objective was to overcome the military blocs and the establishment of a collective security system.[431] The PCI also distanced itself from Moscow and reinforced its role as an independent, national communist party.[432] This would increase credibility at home and pave the way for governmental participation. The SPD was interested in the impact of the PCI's 'polycentrism' on the Eastern European regimes.[433]

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[428] In 'Italienische Kommunisten bei der SPD', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (subsequently FAZ), 2 April 1968, in Press documentation of German parliament, I-060-5. See also Brandt, Schumacher, Schwarzrock, Sühl, *Karrieren eines Außenseiters*, p. 281.

[429] Timmermann, *I Communisti italiani*, p. 38.

[430] Notes on meetings, 30 November 1967, APC, MF 0545.

[431] Ibid.

[432] In an article in January 1968, Segre declared that despite profound ideological and political differences between communist and social democratic parties, there existed a common interest for a European policy to overcome the divisions. The PCI firmly believed in the usefulness of such contacts and exchange of opinions. See *Rinascita*, Segre, 'Aprire la porta al dialogo. I rapporti tra i partiti comunisti e socialdemocratici', 12 January 1968, pp. 8-9.

[433] In a speech held in December 1967, Brandt argued that a tentative polemic from parts of the PCI against East Berlin and Moscow had become noticeable; in WBA, Mappe 267.

For questions of national and international prestige, the PCI could only profit from an exaggeration of its role in the SPD's Ostpolitik. At the beginning of the 1970s, when the FRG's treaties with the East were being implemented, the Italian *Paese Sera* wrote that 'la Ostpolitik è cominciata a Roma'.[434] This claim was supported by the German historian Timmermann in a number of articles published in the Italian press.[435]

The PCI was, without a doubt, the most promising ally to achieve the much desired 'change through rapprochement'. Togliatti's concept of polycentrism had challenged the monolithic tendencies of the international communist movement, which had an impact on Eastern European communist parties. The PCI was a 'trustworthy partner' precisely because it had a great interest of its own in Ostpolitik and encouraged the de-centralisation of the communist movement.

Giorgio Napolitano recalled later that the encounters with the SPD had been of utmost importance and confirmed the weight and autonomy of the PCI's international action.[436] The amount of material and coverage of PCI-SPD relations on Ostpolitik available in the PCI archives is also expressive of the weight the party had attributed to the matter. More importantly, the PCI had observed the SPD's Ostpolitik very closely.[437] Finally, the underlying motivation was to actively contribute to a foreign policy that was not only compatible but almost identical with the PCI's own policy objectives.

Whilst both SPD and PCI had a lot to gain from these encounters, they also proved rather more risky for the Social Democrats than for the Italian Communists. Initially, the meetings

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[434] Ostpolitik began in Rome. *Paese Sera*, 11 May 1971, APC, MF 0162.
[435] An article by Timmermann in *L'Unità*, for example, was entitled 'Gli incontri PCI-SPD aiutarano l'Ostpolitik'; 11 May 1971, APC, MF 0162.
[436] *Rinascita*, Napolitano, 'L'Unità della sinistra avanza in Europa', 3 May 1968, p. 5.
[437] Ostpolitik and the SPD's foreign policy course were widely covered in PCI press. See *Rinascita* at the beginning of the 1970s. For example, 'Lo spazio degli europei', 11 December 1970; 'La nave di Brandt e la navicella dei trattati', 17 March 1972; 'Brandt in campo', 29 September 1972; 'Quanti frutti darà l'albero della "Ostpolitik"', 3 November 1972; 'L'altoparlante della "stabilità"', 10 November 1972; 'La vittoria di Brandt al di là delle cifre', 24 November 1972;'Risultato pieno tra Breznev e Brandt', 25 March 1973, to name only a few.

were secret. This is to say that the SPD did not discuss this venture with its coalition partner.[438] However, meetings were not kept secret and became disclosed shortly after the first encounters took place. They had been closely monitored by the German Secret Service (BND)[439]; once they had been revealed, they became subject of widespread public debate and were partly attacked by German conservatives as well as conservative press. Conservative press coverage about SPD-PCI encounters was mostly negative. The *Stuttgarter Zeitung* stressed that reports about meetings between PCI and SPD were rather alienating and that they revealed more about the foreign policy concept of the Social Democrats than most of their party congress speeches.[440] The term 'mediator' was preferably used by the Italians, as it attributed greater importance to the role of the PCI. The SPD tried to avoid this terminology. The SPD, to avoid further attacks or misinterpretation, went to great lengths to reaffirm the still insurmountable and irreconcilable ideological differences between the two parties. It also maintained that meetings neither had the purpose of fraternisation nor were 'popular front' attempts (a widely popular accusation by the conservative press) and that the Italian Communists were not 'mediating' between the SPD and the Ulbricht regime, but that the nature of talks was merely that of 'information contacts'.[441] Leo Bauer declared that the sole purpose of encounters was to provide exact information and clear interpretation of the SPD's Ostpolitik.[442]

It is also worth asking whether these meetings provoked reaction from the Italian Left, most notably the PSI. As Favretto put it, the British Labour Party, for example, worked closely together with the British embassy and the SI to make both socialist unification and the

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[438] Interview with Bahr, 1 June 2007.
[439] Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 189. See also Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, p. 251.
[440] *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 'SPD und KPI', 2 April 1968.
[441] Interview with Bahr, 1 June 2007. See also *FAZ*, 'Ein römisches Gespräch', 2 April 1968, in Press documentation of the German parliament, I -060-5. See also Leo Bauer, interview with 'Westdeutscher Rundfunk', 6 April 1968, as quoted in Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani*, p. 32.
[442] Leo Bauer in *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 5 April 1968, as quoted in Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani*, pp. 32-33.

opening to the left in Italy happen. This would be the best strategy for dealing with the 'communist threat'.[443] As far as SPD archives are concerned, there is no evidence that SPD-PCI meetings caused tensions between the SPD and the Italian Socialists or the SI. It is also unlikely that contacts with the PCI were criticised since they were intended to serve the cause of détente. In 1967/68, the SPD was primarily interested in the PCI in relation to Ostpolitik and not the PCI's national situation. At the same time, the SPD highlighted ideological differences with the PCI. In doing so, the SPD hoped to protect itself from conservative criticism. In a letter Herbert Wehner reassured the Socialist leader Nenni that the SPD believed that a communist participation in government was avoidable.[444] This was after the publication of misleading press articles in Germany which stated that the SPD allegedly believed that the PCI was an important political force which could no longer be ignored.

The precise role the PCI had played in the SPD's Ostpolitik is difficult to determine. What can be established is that these information contacts were characterised by a common desire in the same cause: to overcome the gap between the two German states in order to improve the possibilities for enduring détente in Europe. Even if the objective of constructing an inner-German bridge (with the help of the PCI) had not been accomplished at that stage, the meetings were not left inconclusive. They actively accompanied the SPD's first initiatives towards the East. SPD-PCI encounters were not lastingly affected by the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia in August 1968. In March 1969, Leo Bauer wrote a letter to Brandt, informing him about a revealing telephone conversation he had with Segre and who informed him that Berlinguer and Galluzzi had held talks with Moscow about the 'German question'.

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[443] Favretto, 'The Wilson Governments and the Italian Centre-Left Coalitions: Between "socialist" Diplomacy and Realpolitik, 1964-70', in *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (2006), pp. 421-422.
[444] Letter from Wehner to Nenni, 3 April 1968, WBA, Mappe 30.

Segre informed Bauer that a fundamental change of course vis-à-vis the FRG was about to occur in the Soviet leadership.[445]

The mere speed with which the SPD picked up Ostpolitik with the beginning of the social-liberal coalition in 1969 supports the argument that the ground for negotiations was established well before. In this, the PCI's task to provide a more authentic picture of the SPD's interests in the East should not be undermined.[446] In 1967/68, the SPD's foreign policy leverage was still constrained by the coalition with the CDU/CSU. When the social-liberal coalition commenced its work, some of the former boundaries seemed more permeable.

1967/68 only marked the onset of direct PCI-SPD relations. Meetings and exchanges between the PCI and the SPD continued on a party level and in various forms throughout the 1970s.[447] After the formalisation of Ostpolitik and after Brandt's resignation from office in 1974, they assumed a different dimension. At the end of the 1960s, the SPD's interest in the PCI was centred around Ostpolitik. Towards the mid-1970s, the SPD increasingly observed the PCI's revisionism, Eurocommunist course and development in the Italian political scene. The SPD's party executive established a working group led by Horst Ehmke, which dealt with the developments of Western European communist parties, Eurocommunisn and the declared dedication to the principles of pluralism and democracy. To avoid Conservative attacks and denunciations, the group was named 'study group South-West Europe'.[448] Moreover, apart

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[445] See letter from Bauer to Brandt, 25 March 1969, in WBA, Allgemeine Korrespondenz 1966-69, Mappe 2.
[446] See Timmermann who also argues that the meetings were not left without results. The PCI provided a more realistic picture of Germany's interests and once the social-liberal coalition was formed, it did not have to start from zero, in *I Comunisti italiani*, pp. 51-52.
[447] Ehmke, *Mittendrin*, p. 254-255. Voigt, 'Dialog zwischen SPD und kommunistischen Parteien', in Karlheinz Bentele, Renate Faerber-Husemann, Fritz W. Scharpf and Peer Steinbrück (eds), *Metamorphosen. Annäherungen an einen vielseitigen Freund. Für Horst Ehmke zum Achtzigsten* (Bonn: Dietz, 2007), p. 279.
[448] Ehmke, *Mittendrin*, pp. 254-255.

from the newly established German Communist Party, the PCI was also the only communist party to regularly attend congresses of the German Young Socialists.[449]

4.) The 'Great Coalition' in Germany, 1966-1969

The CDU/CSU coalition with the Free Democrats had collapsed as a result of an economic recession and budgetary debate that turned into a crisis involving Chancellor Ludwig Erhard who had lost the trust of his own party (i.e. over the handling of the economic recession, the CDU's loss in the regional elections in Hesse and not least due to a lack of trust in his leadership).[450] This subsequently had evolved in a much wider crisis between the coalition partners. On 27 October 1966 the FDP withdrew four of its ministers, practically forcing the Conservatives to open up towards the SPD. The idea of entering a coalition with the CDU/CSU had been controversially debated in the SPD and despised by many leading figures. Brandt, for instance, had been very hesitant about the project from the start.[451] Herbert Wehner, in agreement with Helmut Schmidt on the matter, was the most decisive supporter of such a constellation and had been working towards a coalition with the Conservatives from June 1960 onwards in order to demonstrate the SPD's governmental responsibility.[452] Wayne C. Thompson convincingly laid out that since the beginning of the 1960s, Wehner had steered his party into power and became the indispensable figure in the

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[449] APC, MF 074.
[450] See Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 232 and p. 236 ff.
[451] See Barbara Marshall who argued that Brandt preferred a coalition with the FDP, not least because Kiesinger had been a member of the NSDAP. See Marshall, *Willy Brandt*, p. 49.
[452] Helmut Schmidt, unpublished speech in the SPD parliamentary faction, 3 April 2006, p. 3. Helmut Schmidt, 'Vom Klassenkämpfer zum Staatsmann', in Herbert-Wehner-Bildungswerk (ed.), *Herbert Wehner 1906-1990 Deutscher Jahrhundertpolitiker* (Herbert-Wehner-Bildungswerk: Dresden, 2006), p. 75. See also Ehrler, 'Zur Deutschlandpolitik der SPD', p. 85 ff. Schneider, *Die Kunst des Kompromisses*, pp. 28-29 and p. 38. Karl J. Brandstetter, 'Willy Brandts „Ostpolitik" und die Détente: zur Historie einer fortdauernden Begriffsverwirrung', *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, No. 3 (1994), p. 299.

coalition. According to him, the great coalition was simply a political necessity to prove that the SPD was a responsible and acceptable coalition partner.[453]

Informal talks between CDU/CSU and SPD were first held in 1962 but did not go beyond this mere exploratory status. On 27 November 1966, the SPD parliamentary faction voted with a narrow two-third majority in favour of forming a coalition with the CDU/CSU.[454] Wehner was the key strategist behind the coalition.

The 'great coalition' of CDU/CSU and SPD was regarded as a necessary evil and grudgingly 'swallowed' by most Social Democrats and Conservatives. Wehner had become decisive not least because of the mutual distrust and antipathy that characterised the Brandt-Kiesinger relationship. Kiesinger avoided Brandt whenever possible and dealt with Wehner instead.[455]

It was a parliamentary compromise from which the SPD had more to gain than to lose. Not only was it a passport to government, but it also demonstrated to the CDU/CSU that they were not indispensable as a political force in West Germany and that space was opening for different political constellations and parliamentary majorities.

After the collapse of the CDU/CSU coalition with the FDP, the SPD had also entered talks with the Liberals, although the SPD had already moved more evidently in the direction of reaching agreement with the Conservatives. The great coalition had the function of making the SPD 'ripe for government', by proving its democratic legitimacy, and providing it with the necessary governmental expertise. Egon Bahr later recalled that prior to 1966, the SPD was not eligible for government; the coalition was thus indispensable in gaining the necessary experiences to prove responsibility on a national level – without which the electoral success

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[453] Thompson, *The Political Odyssey*, p. 246 and p. 254. Despite its lack of references, it is worth looking at Arnulf Baring who also argues that Wehner was the absolutely decisive man in the government at the time. Baring, *Machtwechsel*, p. 135 and 201.

[454] 73 in favour, 19 against a great coalition. Schneider, *Die Kunst des Kompromisses*, p. 39; see also Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 240.

[455] Thompson, *The Political Odyssey*, p. 257.

of 1969 had been unthinkable.[456] The composition of the great coalition did have the dimension of an 'historic compromise'. The coalition's cabinet included former members of the NSDAP (Chancellor Kiesinger, but also the Social Democrats Karl Schiller and Lauritz Lauritzen), Gerhard Schröder (member of the SA), Herbert Wehner, a former functionary of the KPD, as well as the former emigrant Willy Brandt. The members of the cabinet emerged from two conflicting camps that had fiercely opposed each other since 1945.[457]

The 1969 national election results marked the final transformation of the SPD's march to become a people's party. Its Bad Godesberg Programme, together with the foreign policy reassurances since the early 1960s, and the experience of the great coalition had proved the SPD's democratic legitimacy and governmental responsibility. This had made the SPD acceptable to wide sections of the electorate; beyond the traditional social democratic electorate, and to a voter who did not necessarily identify with a particular party. It had been able to hold on to its traditional voting strength and to attract support of middle-class voters, who had hitherto been suspicious of the SPD's economic and foreign policies as well as Catholics, who the party had been able to reassure due to improved relations with the Church.[458] There were also clear signs that the SPD's new policies towards the East were accepted and carried by large parts of the electorate.

The great coalition between the SPD and the CDU/CSU legitimised the SPD in the eyes of the electorate and opened possibilities for future coalition partners. The Conservatives were forced to realise that the Free Democrats, their preferred coalition partner, were able to switch partners, which attributed much greater importance to the FDP in the parliamentary spectrum (as such, the role of the FDP was indeed comparable with that of the Italian Socialists).

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[456] Bahr, *Zu meiner Zeit*, p. 193.
[457] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 241. See also Marshall, *Willy Brandt*, p. 50.
[458] Stephen Padgett, Tony Burkett, *Political Parties and Elections in West Germany. The Search for a New Stability* (London and New York: C. Hurst & Company, St. Martin's Press, 1986), p. 218.

The coalition with the CDU/CSU was not popular amongst Social Democrats and was by many simply tolerated as a necessary evil to acquire a passport for government. As will be established later, the PCI's equivalent, the 'historic compromise' was similarly regarded by many communists as a necessary tactic in order to assume governmental power. In terms of foreign policy achievements, the great coalition did certainly not achieve any groundbreaking developments.[459] It was 'hostage' to its own internal constraints and contradictions. However, allowing for the many diverging foreign policy ideas between the coalition partners, the CDU/CSU-SPD coalition did achieve an initial and important rapprochement with the East.

5.) The PCI, the SPD and the impact of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968

It was undoubtedly tempting to see the Prague Spring as a sign of the way in which the blocs could soon be overcome and of the possibility of East European regimes acquiring a 'human face'. Both PCI and SPD had observed the Czech course with hope and apprehension. With regard to their Ostpolitik, the Social Democrats hoped the events would lead to a further decentralisation (and eventual degeneration) of the communist bloc and loosen the rigidity of the power blocs in general – similar to the PCI, which had assumed that the process of détente was closely related to the advance of reformers in the East.[460]

It is undeniably correct to assert that the effect of the Cold War on the international politics of Europe was more striking than on the Continent's domestic politics.[461] With respect to the SPD and the PCI this provides only half the picture. Whereas the Prague crisis and the Soviet invasion did not have much of an impact or proved to be of relatively little importance for

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[459] Niedhart, 'Ostpolitik and its impact', p. 119.
[460] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 349. On the Prague Spring and a thorough analysis of the reasons that prompted the Soviet decision to invade, see Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and its aftermath. Czechoslovak politics, 1968-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[461] Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes. The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991* (London: Abacus, 1994), p. 239.

most Western European socialist or social democratic parties, this was unquestionably not the case for the PCI and the SPD, even though the Czech events and Soviet invasion had a much more decisive, long-term impact on the PCI than the SPD.[462] As we will examine later, the Czech crisis did not substantially alter the SPD's Ostpolitik and did not notably decelerate the opening up for negotiations with the East. In terms of opening roads to new governmental constellations in Germany, it in fact speeded up the SPD's course towards the East. The SPD had already thoroughly observed the polycentric and emancipatory tendencies in the Soviet bloc of the early 1960s, when the Sino-Soviet split was publicly debated.[463] The PCI saw the Prague spring as a case study for the establishment of a democratic socialism, a Czech type of socialism which would also act as counter model to Soviet communism in the East. But to the PCI it meant more than that, which is why the consequences of the Czechoslovak crisis were so grave in the long-term and had crucial repercussions on the party's identity. Then again the crisis, paradoxically, opened up new ways and previously ill-conceived possibilities for the PCI.

The Czech crisis signified a serious blow for the Italian Communists and as some put it, marked the start of the PCI's new internationalism.[464] The party's attitude towards the Prague Spring and the Soviet intervention led to the most profound re-thinking of the definition of PCI-CPSU relations and those with the international communist movement thus far. It had occurred in a period when the PCI had engaged in an open dialogue with the SPD and had a crucial national interest in Ostpolitik. The Prague crisis further consolidated the rigidity of the blocs which the PCI so enthusiastically hoped to replace with a new and collective pan-European security system. The invasion revealed a fundamental disconnection between Soviet

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[462] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 351.
[463] Draft of a speech by Brandt at a conference of the Socialist International held in Brussels on 3 September 1964, in AdSD, WBA, Publikationen, Mappe 187.
[464] See, for instance, Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, p. 256.

strategic interests in Europe (a consolidation of the status quo) and the PCI's own political strategies in Italy.

From the beginning, the PCI had followed the reform process in Czechoslovakia with great interest, sympathy, but also apprehension.[465] In April 1968, PCI leader Longo declared in *Rinascita* that 'the events in Czechoslovakia help us to reinforce our position in favour of an Italian road to socialism which we pursue in full liberty and autonomy together with all secular forces of the Left and Catholics'.[466] In May 1968, Luigi Longo travelled to Prague and expressed the PCI's full solidarity towards Czechoslovakia's new course.[467] The Italian Communists certainly had great expectations that Dubček's reform communism might have a domino impact beyond the borders of Czechoslovakia. During many other occasions the PCI reconfirmed its 'solidarity with the process of democratic renovation of Czechoslovakian socialist society, as initiated by the new leaders of the Czech Communist Party'.[468]

These hopes were shattered with the Soviet invasion and the events of August 1968 put a rapid end to the possibility of reform communism in Eastern Europe. The polycentric character of the international communist movement was given a devastating blow, and old norms of the past restored. It had put an end to all hopes of possibilities of reform communism or 'socialism with a human face'. This became ever more evident after 1968 than it had been after the crushing of the Hungarian uprising of 1956.[469] The repercussions of 1968 were more significant because the Prague Spring defined itself explicitly as a communist

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[465] 'Le conclusioni del compagno Longo al CC e alla CCC del PCI', originally in *L'Unità*, 29 March 1968, re-printed in APC, MF 0547.
[466] *Rinascita*, Longo, 'Su alcuni aspetti della compagna elettorale', 12 April 1968, p. 4. See also *Rinascita*, Longo, 'Rapporto sulla Cecoslovacchia', 17 May 1968, p. 16. See also Pajetta, *Le crisi*, p. 121.
[467] Carlo Galluzzi, *La svolta. Gli anni cruciali del Partito Comunista italiano* (Milano: Sperling & Kupfer Editori, 1983), p. 195. See also 'Lettera dei comunisti italiani ai compagni cecoslovacchi' (approved by the Central Committee of the PCI), 1968, in APC, MF 020.
[468] 'Position of the PCI on the Czechoslovak Question', Communiqué of the Political Bureau of the PCI, in *Foreign Bulletin* (April-July 1968), p. 86.
[469] It is also important to remember that contrary to 1968 all Western European communist parties had supported the Soviet invasion of Hungary.

development: while the communist party played a central role, it at no point explicitly questioned its basic international orientation.[470] It also forcefully demonstrated, and this was of great importance to the PCI, that no consensus existed on the concept of socialism and on the limits to acceptable 'national variations'.[471] This implied that the viability of the PCI's own concept of a national, parliamentary road to socialism was put into question.

In the aftermath of the military invasion in August 1968, a vigorous debate had initiated in the PCI.[472] The discussions were not about the PCI's reactions to the Soviet invasion, which had been condemned unanimously[473], but with regard to future PCI-CPSU relations.[474] Many PCI delegates did not intend to modify the position on Czech reform communism or the party's condemnation of the invasion, but they nonetheless wished to improve relations with the CPSU, or at least reduce tension to a minimum.[475] Some PCI delegates, notably Colombi, had called the intervention 'a violent and non-justifiable action' but noted that PCI criticism should be voiced with a sense of 'responsibility and international spirit'.[476]

The extent of activism (or those members more committed or with more 'extreme' attitudes) within the PCI has always been difficult to ascertain. Barth Urban argued that the political profile of the PCI ruled out disengagement from Moscow. After the Czech events of 1968, a third of the Italian middle-level cadres still endorsed the Soviet Union's conduct in that regard, while another third harboured reservations about the Dubček regime.[477] This would explain why the PCI, when condemning the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, somewhat

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[470] For a thorough analysis see also Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 26.
[471] Ibid., p. 27.
[472] Galluzzi, *La svolta*, p. 204.
[473] *Rinascita*, 'Il giudizio del PCI sull'occupazione della Cecoslovacchia 21 agosto 1968', 23 August 1968, p. 1.
[474] Galluzzi, *La svolta*, p. 204.
[475] Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer*, p. 101.
[476] As quoted by Alexander Höbel, 'Il PCI, il '68 Cecoslovacco e il rapporto col PCUS', *Studi Storici*, 4/2001 (Roma: Carocci Editore, 2002), p. 1158.
[477] Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, p. 349.

schizophrenically also reaffirmed the 'deep, fraternal and genuine ties that unite the PCI with the Soviet Union and the CPSU'.[478] As Pajetta recalled later, the PCI's communiqué on the Soviet invasion intended to reinforce the PCI's profound and open disapproval, without suggesting that the party's position signified rupture in any way.[479]

In October 1968, a party statement stressed that conditions for a 'real' internationalism (which would henceforth characterise relations with Moscow), reiterated every party's right and rigorous respect for autonomy, sovereignty, equal rights and non-interference in internal affairs. Berlinguer's statement was accompanied by comforting remarks (for those who feared rupture), reassuring that,

the Soviet Union represents the first, the most grandiose and multiform experience in the building of socialism, nor do we deny that this experience remains and will always be a rich source of precious information for all (...) and we will never underestimate the decisive importance of the existence of the USSR, of a community of socialist states and of their unity.[480]

It has been argued that at the party's rank and file reactions to the Soviet invasion were, as one would assume, not uniform. In many cases, the working class base objected strongly to any disassociation from the Soviet Union.[481] This could explain why the party leadership avoided any abrupt and unequivocal rupture from Moscow at this stage, presupposing of course that the PCI's leadership had in fact desired an open break. This was, however, unlikely at that point.

In order to avoid any clear-cut criticism about the nature of the Soviet system, the PCI contended with a firm criticism about the intervention whilst at the same time praising the

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[478] 'Il giudizio del PCI sull'occupazione della Cecoslovacchia 21 agosto 1968', p. 1.
[479] Pajetta, *Le crisi*, p. 131.
[480] E. Berlinguer, 'Autonomy and diversity, conditions for a real internationalism: reply to Einheit', *Foreign Bulletin* (October-December 1968), pp. 100-103.
[481] Höbel, 'Il PCI, il '68 Cecoslovacco e il rapporto col PCUS', p. 1160. See also Varsori who argued that the PCI (leadership) had to take into consideration that a section within the party was favouring Moscow's positions and the party's militants, which for many years had been attracted by the Soviet myth and the Bolshevik revolution; in *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali dal 1943 al 1992*, p. 192.

Soviet Union and the PCI's strong and genuine relations with Moscow. PCI-Soviet relations were characterised by condemnation of Soviet military action and a failure to re-think the past approval of Moscow's military intervention in 1956. Avoidance of a thorough analysis and criticism of the Soviet system, unconditional autonomy, and independence versus fraternal and genuine ties also contributed to the problem of relations from 1968 until the mid to late 1970s. Any comprehensive analysis of the Soviet system and PCI-CPSU relations would have involved a thorough and critical re-assessment of the PCI's position on the events of 1956. Even many years later the Soviet invasion of Hungary was still justified as necessary. Schizophrenically, Longo in the same statement had justified the 'painful necessity' of 1956, whilst declaring every party's right to national sovereignty as an undeniable principle, dismissing the right to military intervention in internal affairs of another communist party.[482] The major part of the PCI leadership around Longo did not accept the renunciation of the PCI's autonomy, whilst neither intending a rupture with Moscow.[483] In short, the PCI's leading circles were fundamentally unclear and hesitant about future relations, but no one thought about a break (or dared to voice it) at that point. These ambiguous positions led foreign observers to query the PCI's true nature, and many were tempted to dismiss them as mere tactic manoeuvres. Höbel, somewhat overstating, declared that the episode marked a first point of no return in PCI-CPSU relations.[484] What was clear, however, is that in 1968 the PCI's long-term prospects and ambitions would eventually no longer be compatible with and lead to insurmountable divergences with the CPSU, and that the PCI would have to re-think its priorities - organic and genuine ties with the Soviet Union, versus domestic ambitions and implementation of its own road to socialism (which essentially meant achieving socialism through structural reforms in a coalition government).

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[482] Longo, 'Interview to l'Astrolabio on events of Czechoslovakia', *Foreign Bulletin*, no date given, p. 2.
[483] Höbel, 'Il PCI, il '68 Cecoslovacco e il rapporto col PCUS', p. 1166.
[484] Ibid., p. 1171.

East-West relations were not disturbed by the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Western powers (the United States, West Germany and NATO in particular) had displayed a low-key reaction to the invasion of Czechoslovakia.[485] It was seen as a regional conflict within the Soviet sphere of influence which had no further or relatively little impact upon the West.

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia on 22/23 August 1968, unanimously condemned by the SPD as a severe setback for East-West détente[486], had comparatively little impact upon Brandt's ideas. It also had relatively little impact on the process of Ostpolitik, which was more hindered by the coalition partner's return to intransigence. A brief look at the speed with which the East-political process (which had come to a short-lived freeze after the Soviet invasion) had been resumed under the social-liberal coalition at the beginning of 1969 underlines this argument.

The SPD reiterated the correctness of its policies towards the East and stated that the events must not interrupt the general improvement of East-West relations through a relaxation of tension in Europe.[487] It is also not entirely correct to assert that before the Prague Spring, the SPD had originally conceived its Ostpolitik in terms of relations with Eastern Europe first and the Soviet Union second; and that it was only in the aftermath of the invasion that West Germany realised that it had to deal with Moscow directly.[488] Moscow had always been of high strategic concern in the SPD's concept towards the East. Given the power policies and geometry in the East, Moscow had to be approached first.[489]

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[485] Maud Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 325.

[486] SPD press releases from 22 August and 25 August 1968, in AdSD, WBA, Publikationen, Mappe 283. See also SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1968/1969*, p. 150. See also Brandt's declaration on the events of 21 August 1968, originally in W. Brandt, *Reden und Interviews 1968-1969* (Bonn, 1969), p. 48, re-printed in Boris Meissner (ed.), *Die deutsche Ostpolitik 1961-1970. Kontinuität und Wandel. Dokumentation* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1970), p. 277.

[487] Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 181.

[488] Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 192-193.

[489] Brandt, 'German Policy toward the East', *Foreign Affairs* (April 1968), re-printed in AdSD, WBA, Mappe 275. Speech by Bahr, 'Ostpolitik im Rückblick', 28 November 1997, as quoted in Fischer, *Im deutschen Interesse*, p. 34.

By 1962 the SPD Party Congress had already concluded that it was impossible to force solutions on the German question on the Soviet Union.[490] According to Brandt, the key to reunification had laid in Moscow, not East-Berlin.[491] This has led some to assert that there existed discrepancies between Wehner and Brandt on whether West Germany should deal with Moscow (Brandt) or East-Berlin (Wehner) first over the German problem. With regard to both Wehner and Brandt this was only partly true. Wehner had stressed in December 1966 that German reunification was only achievable in accordance with the Soviet Union and Brandt also realised that there were many paths to Germany's Ostpolitik and all possibilities had to be exploited.[492] It was only in 1970 that Moscow was given the main priority after GDR leaders had made it clear that they would negotiate a treaty with the FRG only if the latter had signed a treaty with Moscow beforehand.[493]

After the crushing of the Prague Spring, the coalition's room for manoeuvre had been severely minimised and previous, already existing, disagreements came all the more powerfully to the surface. Since the crushing of Czech reform communism, there was increasing support within the CDU/CSU for maintaining all existing legal standpoints (with reference to pre-war borders etc) and adopting an uncompromising line vis-à-vis the East.[494] The CDU/CSU's willingness to cooperate with the East came to an almost complete standstill, and the Soviet invasion proved – in the eyes of many Conservatives – the correctness of the Hallstein Doctrine. Additionally, the few convergences between the two coalition partners had been exploited to the full. By the middle of 1968 the most essential economic and financial reform projects of the great coalition had almost all been

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[490] 'Kundgebungen und Beschlüsse des Parteitages von Köln', in SPD (ed.), *Jahrbuch der SPD 1962/1963*, p. 454.
[491] Schmidt, *Kalter Krieg*, p. 544.
[492] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, pp. 307-308.
[493] Ibid., pp. 353.
[494] Loth, *Overcoming*, p. 104.

implemented.[495] Not much common ground was left. This showed how slender the basis for cooperation between the two had been.

In the Ostpolitik – and Deutschlandpolitik – the Prague crisis led many in the CDU/CSU to re-think the opening to the East and to return to previous traditional positions.[496] The SPD, anxious not to interrupt the rapprochement with the East, wished to prevent the freezing of former improvements in East-West relations and the German question.

After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the great coalition fundamentally disagreed on Soviet intentions and how to react, which, in turn, almost led to a complete foreign policy stagnation.[497] The already existing profound discrepancies in the foreign policy assessment came all the more powerfully to the fore. In spite of the Soviet invasion, the SPD aimed to move further in its policy towards the East, which had become impossible in a government with the CDU/CSU.[498] Helmut Schmidt reaffirmed later that the opening to the East had been unsuccessful due to the Conservatives' intransigence; then Chancellor Kiesinger did not agree to overcome the Hallstein doctrine in practice and to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Personal antipathies between Brandt and Kiesinger (Brandt heavily despised Kiesinger who had been a former member of the NSDAP) did not make cooperation easier.[499]

In addition to the, by then almost insuperable differences between the two main parties, the FDP had held a crucial Party Congress in January 1968, after which the Free Democrats moved considerably closer to the SPD and some of the past barriers between the two parties, particularly in the foreign policy field, had been overcome.[500] FDP party leader Scheel stressed that the concept entailed in the Hallstein doctrine had become outdated similar to

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[495] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 268.
[496] Meyer, *Herbert Wehner*, p. 341.
[497] See also Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung*, p. 204.
[498] See also Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 268.
[499] Helmut Schmidt, speech in the SPD parliamentary faction meeting, 3 April 2006, p. 5.
[500] See also Clemens Heitmann, *FDP und Ostpolitik* (Sankt Augustin: Comdok, 1989), p. 100.

previous questions about national borders or recognition of them. It was exactly those (former) perceptions which had to be overcome.[501]

Even with respect to domestic policies, where internal consensus had been rather minimal, a rapprochement no longer seemed impossible.[502] By the mid 1960s, leading interest groups and parties in the Federal Republic were favouring a less rigid approach towards the communist bloc. West German industry hoped that a more flexible policy would bolster trade with the East.[503]

Paradoxically therefore, the Prague Spring had helped the SPD to embark upon its Ostpolitik in the long run. The controversy over Ostpolitik in the aftermath of the invasion created an opportunity for new interest coalitions to form in Germany. The Czech events brought the differences in the coalition and its operational strategy towards the East to the surface, while at the same time new room for a rapprochement with the Liberals had opened, while former divergences between the two parties became increasingly unravelled. In the aftermath of the Czech invasion, new foreign policy terrain between the FDP and the SPD had emerged. It is difficult to imagine that the SPD would have managed to implement its policies towards the East successfully if it continued the governmental cooperation with the Conservatives.

Ironically, the Soviet invasion had pushed the Italian Communists into developing a more independent political course, being subsequently more critical about Soviet foreign policy and realising the constraints of adherence to the CPSU on the PCI's national objectives.

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[501] Speech at the FDP Party Congress held on 31 January 1968 in Freiburg, re-printed in Boris Meissner (ed.), *Die deutsche Ostpolitik 1961-1970*, pp. 241-242.
[502] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 268.
[503] David F. Patton, *Cold War Politics in Post War Germany* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), p. 64.

6.) The PCI's Historic Compromise: a long-term strategy for domestic and international legitimisation

As already established, the PCI's foreign policy developments increasingly intended to prevent any return to the monolithism of the traditional communist conception as the guiding principle of state-to-state affairs within the international communist movement.[504] Towards the end of the 1960s, the PCI also sought more rigorously a gradual dissolution of both power blocs, as a process of détente would facilitate the reacquisition of autonomy as far as Italy was concerned. The PCI knew that an 'Italian way to socialism' (which in other words meant a PCI participation in government) would, if at all, stand a chance only in light of global détente and the overcoming of bloc hostilities. If the ideological rigidity of the blocs was reduced this would guarantee the individual countries more freedom of independent action in domestic affairs.

In as much as the SPD proved to be an external point of legitimisation for the PCI, the SPD also represented a point of reference for the PCI. Not only did the PCI closely follow the SPD's foreign policy course at the end of the 1960s, the PCI had also observed the coalition the SPD had entered with the Conservatives between 1966 and 1969.

With regard to internal matters, Italy and its political establishment faced a political stagnation with the dual eruption of the successive revolts of the student movement and the trade unions in 1968/69. The period 1968-9 signalled the crisis of the centre-left, the crisis of the DC and the crisis of the PCI.[505] The inherent crisis of the Italian political system would - by the PCI's calculation – make the DC more amenable and induce it towards an entente with the PCI. The timing had indeed seemed promising: the centre-left governments with the PSI (which had dominated the entire 1960s) had failed by the beginning of the 1970s. The centrist

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[504] See also *Rinascita*, Giuseppe Vacca, 'La logica dei blocchi', 17 October 1969, p. 15.
[505] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 223.

government of 1972-73 only enjoyed too narrow a majority for it to become a realistic future project.[506] Hence, the 'social and political crisis' of the Italian political establishment in the 1970s induced Berlinguer to render Togliatti's recognition of differential paths to socialism more concrete and practical. In theory, the PCI's rationale was both plausible and correct and seemed to come to the appropriate conclusions at the time. Parallels with the German 'historic compromise' were evident.

Though the proposal for an historic compromise had its origins in the crisis of the Italian political system, it was proposed as a reaction to an international event.[507] The immediate cause for the concretisation of an Italian road to socialism was the coup d'état in Chile in 1973.[508] In Chile, a left-wing government led by Salvador Allende had attempted to rule against a strong Christian democratic opposition and was crushed by a military take-over. The basic argument was to prevent a repetition in Italy of the events in Chile and to establish a parliamentary majority strong enough to unite the country and avoid the danger of splitting the country into two. In the third of his articles in *Rinascita*, Berlinguer explained why it would be 'illusory to think that, even if the parties of the Italian Left succeeded in gaining 51 percent of the share of votes and parliamentary seats (...) this would be sufficient to guarantee the survival and workings of a government that represented this 51 percent.'[509] The PCI's historic compromise essentially intended to be an entente between the 'communist, socialist and Catholic masses', which would provide the basis for a government of radical reforms.[510] The broad spectrum of masses it represented would also be its legitimisation.

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[506] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 576.
[507] Rubbi, *Il Mondo*, p. 20.
[508] The concept of the historic compromise was first launched in three subsequent articles published in the communist weekly *Rinascita* in September/October 1973.
[509] E. Berlinguer, reflections on Italy of the Chilean events, in *Rinascita*, 'Alleanze sociali e schieramenti politici', 12 October 1973, p. 4.
[510] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, pp. 232-233.

At a social level, the most important alliance was that of the working class with large sections of the *ceti medi* (middles classes). As such, Berlinguer's insight did not mark much of a novelty. The coming to terms with the middle classes (to render them impervious to reactionary appeals) had been part and parcel of the PCI's post-war strategy. The Chilean events therefore only precipitated what had long been under way or were used as a pretext to give the Italian way to socialism a new context. Neither did the historic compromise mark a reversal of the PCI's strategy of the past. It was the logical continuation of the PCI's post-war strategy of alliance-seeking and coming to terms with the Catholic sector. It was part of the PCI's concept of the Italian way to socialism, which was given a renewed and more precise meaning with the historic compromise.[511] Fundamental to coming to governmental power in Italy involved a coming to terms with large parts of the Catholic sectors and the Christian Democratic Party. This was one of the origins behind the historic compromise formula. An entente was feasible since the DC was, according to Berlinguer, a party of 'deep contradictions', a party 'tied to the interests of big economic concentration and parasitic groups, but also a party that because of opinion, of its citizens, peasants, women and workers, must take popular needs and aspirations into account'.[512] During 1966, Luigi Longo, then PCI leader, had asserted that the party's attitude towards Catholics was not based on a casual or tactical necessity.

The internal strength of the DC, as Sassoon put it, 'was not only a question of votes, but resided also in the fact that the Christian Democratic Party had "colonised" the State, occupying through its clientele system all the major apparatuses of the State including the credit system and the public sector'.[513]

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[511] Longo's interview with the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, re-printed in *Foreign Bulletin* (September 1966), p. 52.
[512] 'Berlinguer's Report to the Central Committee in preparation for the Fourteenth Congress of the PCI', (extract), 10 December 1974, in Sassoon (ed.), *The Italian Communists speak for themselves*, p. 149.
[513] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 223.

The underlying idea of the historic compromise strategy was of course to overcome the *conventio ad excludendum* (an Italian peculiarity which essentially was an *unwritten* pact amongst some of the other political forces that excluded the PCI from the area of government by referring to its democratic illegitimacy). It was an attempt to render these boundaries permeable, change the PCI's image from a party of opposition to a party of government and to render the altering of power in Italy somewhat more concrete beyond it being merely a theoretical possibility.

However, the historic compromise was not just a strategy seeking conciliation with the main democratic forces of the Italian political system, but it did also compromise (even if not intentionally) the diverging positions within the PCI itself. By proposing the strategy, the PCI avoided, at least temporarily, a thorough analysis and coming to terms with its own still ambivalent identity.

On a similar level, it was perhaps the only way to achieve power, avoiding a rupture with the Soviet Union and the more complex issue of re-defining Italian communist 'ideology' and relations with Moscow. It could be explained (vis-à-vis the party's militants) as a necessary strategy in order to achieve power, a strategy in line with Gramsci's thinking or Togliatti's elaboration of it. It did not question or alter the PCI's permanent link with Moscow (at least this is how it could be 'sold' to the party's more militant base).

The prospect of coming to power would avoid triggering a crisis amongst the party's militants, although cooperation with the Christian Democrats was difficult to swallow for many of them (much as it had been the case for many SPD members). It has been held that Berlinguer had to balance conciliation towards the DC at home with conciliation towards Moscow in the hope of assuaging discontent among communist militants in Italy.[514] Again, the degree of militancy within the PCI had always been difficult to ascertain. It is therefore hard to assess to what extent Berlinguer had the party behind him in formulating the historic

[514] Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, p. 271.

compromise and when accepting Italy's membership in NATO prior to the national elections of 1976, in order to achieve the proposed alliance strategy in Italy. The internal organisational structure of communist parties, of course, has the advantage of allowing a certain amount of flexibility at the top. Leaders can easily justify a certain policy as an operational strategy in order to come to power. Those communist members antagonistic towards the historic compromise, might have accepted it as a strategy because in theory it had involved coming to power, but, as we will see, a DC that used the PCI's abstention in support of a minority government, without the Communists' acceding power or being offered something in return, became increasingly difficult to justify to many members and voters.

A number of scholars suggested that Berlinguer had continued to praise the Soviet Union between 1976 and 1979 – precisely to push through his domestic policies that were so unpopular at the PCI's base.[515] This is plausible.

It was precisely those links on the international level which caused such enormous suspicion and concern amongst Italy's Western neighbours and the United States. It was also those links which, according to the party's many opponents, marked the crucial distinction between a party at the threshold of government and a party in government.

Any advance by the PCI would thus have to be implemented with maximum caution, reassuring the party's democratic credentials and willingness to cooperate with the other political forces. This put the PCI in the difficult and ambivalent position of carefully balancing two increasingly incompatible but mutual interests: reassurances vis-à-vis the PCI's national and international adversaries with periodic praising of the Soviet Union.

Initially, and above all electorally speaking, the historic compromise formula seemed to pay off. In the national elections of June 1976 the PCI increased its votes to 34.4 percent, the

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[515] Patrick McCarthy, *The Crisis of the Italian State: From the Origins of the Cold War to the Fall of Berlusconi* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), p. 117.

highest result in the PCI's history (compared with 27.1 percent in 1972).[516] Whether the high electoral result stood in direct relation with the historic compromise is difficult to determine, but for the PCI leadership it was tempting to interpret the electoral success as a plebiscite of its correctness. The national elections results in 1976 (as well as the regional elections in the previous year) were indeed remarkable, stunning Italy and its Western neighbours alike.

It is worth having a look at the electoral results of the other parties in Italy, as electoral success is always also measured in comparison with that of a party's political opponents. The PCI's remarkable gains were not achieved at the expense of the DC. In fact, the Italian Christian Democrats managed to increase their share of votes, though minimally, compared to the previous elections of 1972. (+ 0.02 gaining 38.7 percent in 1976). The most significant losses were made by the smaller parties, the Social Democrats and the Liberals (- 1.77 percent and – 2.59 percent). The election outcome showed that it was no longer possible for the DC to govern by itself (or with some of the smaller parties as junior partners), nor was it possible to ignore the PCI any longer, especially as the PSI refused to enter a government that rejected PCI inclusion and demanded some sort of communist contribution.[517] The gap between the two large Italian parties had narrowed significantly.

Whereas the three years from 1966-69 proved to be a stepping stone for the SPD towards full governmental responsibility, the Italian Communists were never able to transform themselves from a party of opposition to a party of government. The DC managed to rule between 1976 and 1979 (filling all the government positions), with the abstention of the PCI, PSI. PRI and PSDI. The most important Italian Christian Democrat, who would have made 'some sort of alliance' with the PCI possible, was kidnapped and subsequently killed by the Red Brigades in 1978. Whether Aldo Moro (against the will of many in his party) would have ultimately made a PCI participation (and thus the historic compromise) possible can, of course, no

[516] The PCI's electoral advancement was already evident in the June 1975 regional elections.
[517] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 228.

longer be determined with certainty and remains subject to historical speculation. Sassoon held that 'in killing Moro the Red Brigades destroyed the key man who would have paved the way for entry of the PCI in the government' and that they subsequently, 'permitted the revival of the right wing of the DC'[518] (and hence the staunchly anti-communist wing of the DC).

The SPD emerged from the years of the great coalition strengthened, demonstrating to the CDU/CSU that the years of conservative hegemony had come to an end. Most importantly, the SPD had a foreign policy agenda to offer to the Free Democrats, which had realised that their own foreign policies were more likely to be implemented in a coalition with the SPD. The interests of the SPD (even if considerably more on the foreign policy agenda) were conform with and compatible with those of the FDP. The PCI (somewhat naively) assumed that the PSI voluntarily agreed to a 'great coalition' of all forces without realising that it proved to be of little benefit to the Italian Socialists, in fact as disadvantageous as it was in the eyes of most Christian Democrats.

Although the DC had still emerged strongest party from the 1976 national polls, the advance of the PCI at the expense of the smaller parties (PSDI and PLI) meant that the DC could no longer form a stable government excluding the Left. Whereas in Germany, the 1966-69 experience had demonstrated that the SPD could no longer be ignored and that terrain for new parliamentary majorities had opened, the DC was not ready for the PCI's historic compromise in its governmental form.[519]

'Great coalitions' are always a marriage of convenience. They are implemented either in a 'state of emergency'; in a situation of political stalemate when no other parliamentary majority is viable; or in situations when it is profitable for both coalition partners. In other words, when there is a compelling parliamentary reason such as crisis or lack of seats etc.

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[518] Ibid., p. 230.
[519] Ibid., p. 228.

Though Italy faced a political and social stagnation in 1976, there was no such crisis and the DC still managed to form a minority led government.

In 1966, there had been persuasive reasons for both SPD and CDU/CSU to enter a great coalition. Due to West Germany's 'three-party system', coalition options had narrowed significantly. The years from 1966 to 1969 offered the SPD to prove its governmental legitimacy and secured the governmental survival of the CDU/CSU. In Italy, the minority led DC governments of the mid-1970s secured the survival of the Christian Democrats at the expense of the Communists. The DC had formed a government on its own, relying on the benevolence or on the abstentions of other parties, negotiating with them the government programme to face the inherent 'crisis' in Italy. Thus, between 1976 until the end of 1979, Italy was governed by minority DC-led governments which had to appeal to the PCI to guarantee their survival. The official reason for the PCI's return to the opposition in January 1979 was its hostility to the new European Monetary System adopted that month; used more as a prerequisite to distract from the fact that the years of 'national solidarity' had definitely come to a close.

Between 1976 and 1979, the PCI had tied its future very closely to the historic compromise formula, thereby avoiding any serious elaboration and reassessment of the party's ambivalent nature. After the failure of the historic compromise the party was ever more deeply disoriented. The party's social and political alliance options had become exhausted. Whereas the coalition with the CDU/CSU had in fact proved to be a stepping-stone towards fully-fledged governmental participation for the SPD, the PCI had been contented with a 'compromise to the compromise'. This resulted in a considerable loss of support (- 4 percent in 1979) for the first time in the party's post-war history. The policy of compromise had

become a mere policy of subordination.[520] By accepting a DC-led minority government (without gaining anything in return), the PCI had been subservient to the DC and inevitably defended the corruption of the Italian state, the corruption of a system it had been so eager to replace.

The PCI had failed because it had tied its strategy too closely around cooperation with the DC, leaving the PSI largely ignored. An historic compromise would not have been desirable or profitable from a PSI perspective. The Italian Socialists would have been the 'most irrelevant' partner in such a governmental constellation. The strategy would have essentially been a coalition between the two great forces in Italy (although of course it officially included the PSI and other democratic forces). In this governmental constellation - if successful - the PSI would have contributed to its own demise as a (largely dispensable) party of government. Additionally, the more pro-communist PSI leader Francesco De Martino (who had previously argued for re-established rapports with the PCI), had been replaced by the staunchly anti-communist new leader Bettino Craxi in July 1976. With the beginning of his party leadership, Craxi was most profoundly concerned with creating a more distinctive party image and ideologically distancing the PSI from the PCI. Busy recreating a new and distinct party identity, it became clear that Craxi was little interested, if not overtly reluctant, towards an alliance or identification of any sort with the PCI.[521]

The heterogeneous Italian political scenery also proved to be disadvantageous for the PCI. Whereas in West Germany, the SPD 'enjoyed' the uncontested hegemony of the (centre)-left, the many smaller left-wing parties in Italy were constantly forced to distinguish themselves from their opponents to secure their own parliamentary survival. Contrary to the PCI, the SPD had something to offer to the CDU/CSU during the great coalition (the latter being interested in remaining party of government) and later to the smaller FDP. The Italian Communists'

[520] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 228.
[521] See also Featherstone, *Socialist Parties and European Integration*, p. 230.

proposal was practically (although not rhetorically) intended towards the DC. It largely left the PSI ignored. Had the Italian Socialists agreed to the historic compromise, the PSI would have rendered itself dispensable. At least as far as the PSI was concerned, the PCI's proposal had failed to take that into consideration. The failure of the historic compromise had opened additional space for the PSI. The PCI in tolerating a DC-led government, – and as such defending the Italian State with its corruption and degenerations as it had turned into during three decades of DC hegemony – had become identified with the system itself (at least in the eyes of many of its voters). Even if in theory it proved to be a viable strategy at the time, it had become soon apparent that there was little practical application to it. The outside observer may therefore correctly question why the PCI continued to hold on to this alliance strategy so vigorously until 1979.

7.) The consolidation of the SPD's Ostpolitik in the 1970s

The beginning to the mid 1970s marked a period of détente, a progressive relaxation of Cold War political, ideological and military tensions as well as of the international system's rigid bipolar structure. This was in the interest of both superpowers: for the US, détente promised to reduce the financial burden in Europe, which was of particular concern in light of US engagement in Vietnam. The war had proved impossible to win, US society was deeply divided over its continuation and it had become an enormous drain on economic resources. Consequently, Washington had been less centrally concerned with European affairs in the late 1960s and early 1970s, than it had been a decade before. The salience of Western European affairs in American foreign policy had steadily diminished in a period where the key issues preoccupying US-policy makers were the war in Vietnam and the crisis in the Middle East.[522] Vietnam played a singularly important role in American policy thinking, especially during the

[522] Introduction by N. Piers Ludlow in N. Piers Ludlow (ed.) *European Integration and the Cold War*, p. 9.

Nixon administration, whose central preoccupation from 1969 to 1973 (at the height of the bilateral phase of Ostpolitik) was disengagement of the United States from military involvement in the war in Indochina.[523]

The prospects of superpower détente were therefore highly endorsed. At the end of the 1960s, leading SPD officials assumed that the United States were planning to withdraw some, or perhaps all, of its troops from West Germany, in view of the growing domestic pressures in the US to reduce overseas commitments as a result of the continuing war in Vietnam.[524] In 1970 there had been a strong movement in the US Senate to introduce legislation to reduce drastically the size of American forces in Europe. Although the so-called 'Mansfield resolution' was defeated, it was increasingly feared that its support would grow for the US to unilaterally and significantly reduce forces in Europe.[525]

The SPD's vision of European détente was therefore partially designed to create new options to protect German military and security interests in the expected reduction of US forces in Germany and Western Europe.

For the Soviet Union, détente promised to reinforce the status quo in both East and Western Europe. After the events of 1968, Moscow had been increasingly concerned with consolidating its own sphere of influence. The weakness in the Soviet economy - the need for access of Western markets and technology - provided an additional rationale for Moscow's interest in détente.[526] Sarotte convincingly argued that in their dealings in Europe, both superpowers were heavily influenced by concern over issues arising elsewhere in the world.[527] The Nixon administration's efforts at détente in Europe were in large part an attempt to

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[523] Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation. American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1985), p. 10.
[524] US Defence Minister McNamara announced US plans to withdraw troops from Germany in the spring of 1967. On the subject see Schneider, *Die Kunst des Kompromisses*, pp. 204-205.
[525] Colin Bown, Peter J. Mooney, *Cold War to détente 1945-80*, Second Edition (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981), p. 148.
[526] Hanhimäki, Westad (ed.), *The Cold War*, p. 481.
[527] Sarotte, *Dealing*, p. 176.

establish favourable conditions for a US withdrawal from Vietnam.[528] To an extent not previously appreciated, Soviet motives were strikingly similar. Sarotte argued that Soviet receptiveness to both détente and Ostpolitik was clearly a function of increasing worry about the Sino-Soviet conflict and that global concerns of the Soviet superpower had direct consequences for the resolution of the German-German dispute.[529] This is not only plausible but likely.

After Brandt's election as chancellor in 1969, West Germany improved relations with the East. The FRG rapidly signed the much disputed Non-Proliferation Treaty on 28 November 1969. This had previously been impossible, as the Conservatives heavily opposed the ratification.[530] With its ratification, the SPD-FDP coalition aimed to fulfil a Soviet prerequisite for talks with the FRG.[531] The FRG also signed a Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviet Union in 1970 (ratified in May 1972) and simultaneously entered negotiations with Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR. Agreements with Eastern Europe and East Germany were concluded between 1970 and 1973. The treaty with Moscow was a precondition for further improvements with Germany's Eastern neighbours.

At the time, however, the SPD's Eastern policy was not unanimously praised. Ostpolitik was a highly controversially and heavily debated national policy matter. Opponents, most notably the CDU/CSU, blamed Brandt and the SPD for 'selling out' Germany's national interests by recognising the two states in Germany and of her post-war borders, which would, in the long

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[528] Ibid.
[529] Ibid., pp. 176-177.
[530] The pro-Gaullist section of the CDU and the CSU was against the signing of the Non-Proliferation agreement, whereas the 'Atlanticists' in the CDU adopted a more positive attitude and agreed to its ratification; on the subject see William E. Griffith, *Die Ostpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), p. 190; Hartmut Soell, *Helmut Schmidt*, p. 595; Schneider, *Die Kunst des Kompromisses*, p. 202.
[531] Letter Brandt to Chancellor Kiesinger, 15 July 1968, in *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1968*, Band II: 1. Juli bis 31. Dezember 1968, Institut für Zeitgeschichte des Auswärtigen Amtes (ed.) (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), p. 871.

term, seal on the division and make reunification ever more impossible.[532] As a result, almost the entire CDU/CSU parliamentary faction abstained during the parliamentary ratification of the treaty with Moscow in May 1972.[533] The Bonn-Moscow treaty was followed by treaties with Warsaw (December 1970), a quadripartite agreement on Berlin (September 1971), a series of inter-German follow-up agreements (regulating traffic and postal issues between the two Germanies)[534] as well as by a Bonn-Prague treaty of December 1973. Treaties establishing diplomatic relations with Hungary and Bulgaria were concluded in December 1973. This process was accompanied by bilateral superpower negotiations, leading to a first arms control agreement (SALT I), limiting strategic arms as concluded by the United States and Moscow in May 1972.

The SPD's Ostpolitik, deeply controversial in the 1970s, had become the object of widespread consensus by 1982.[535] The debate about whether Ostpolitik was appropriate seemed to have been answered when the social-liberal Ostpolitik was adopted almost wholeheartedly by the CDU/CSU-FDP government in 1982. The SPD's Ostpolitik had always been contested by those claiming that the accommodating attitude of the West German government towards the SED and the Soviet Union had delayed the breakdown of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany. Supporters highlighted that the SPD's conciliatory policy of détente was the only

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[532] See also Julia von Dannenberg, *The Foundations of Ostpolitik. The Making of the Moscow Treaty between West Germany and the USSR* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 1.

[533] 'Wahlprogramm der SPD', agreed upon at the extraordinary Party Congress held in Dortmund on 13 October 1972, in Ossip K. Flechtheim (ed.), *Die Parteien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1973), pp. 244-292.

[534] In a number of follow-up accords to the Basic Treaty of 1972, Bonn and East Berlin agreed to improve travel conditions from West to East, to modernise road and rail-road connections, to open new border checkpoints, and to facilitate mail, parcel service and telephone connections. Through a series of accords, the SPD-FDP coalition hoped to improve living conditions of Eastern Germans and improve trade relations.

[535] Even after the clear-cut election result of 1972 the Eastern treaties and above all the basic treaty with the GDR remained subject of fierce inner-parliamentary debate. The CSU, for example, filed a lawsuit against the basic treaty at the German Constitutional Court (referring to reunification as a compulsory goal as entailed in the preamble of the Basic Law). In its verdict of 31 July 1973, the highest court declared the conformity of the treaty with the German Basic Law. The court nonetheless reiterated the necessity of an unambiguous, legal interpretation of the basic treaty. See Martin Huber, *Die Bundestagswahlkämpfe der CDU/CSU als Oppositionsparteien 1972, 1976, 1980, 2002* (München: Herbert Utz, 2008), pp. 50-51. On the subject see also Christian Hacke, 'Die deutschlandpolitischen Konzeptionen von CDU und CSU in der Oppositionszeit (1969-1982)', in Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (ed.), *Historisch Politische Mitteilungen. Archiv für christlich-demokratische Politik* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1994), p. 44.

feasible option at the time, to secure peace, which ultimately made the non-violent revolution of 1989 possible. Less debatable was the fact that Ostpolitik, as a contribution to the Western détente policy, was simultaneously a bold policy of pursuing the national interest of increasing autonomy for West Germany to adopt an independent and stronger say in world affairs.[536] Sarotte, however, argued that evidence in the SED archives does not support this argument. If Brandt hoped to make use of closer cooperation with the GDR as a means of gaining leverage over his European allies, so Sarotte argued, he did not ask the SED explicitly to join him in doing so.[537]

However, contrary to this argument, it is rather unlikely that Brandt discussed his motives with his East German opponents. Even if the main concern may have been superpower attitude, it should not be denied that re-gaining sovereignty vis-à-vis the European allies was an important 'by product' of the SPD's Eastern policies.

Ostpolitik had always been contested by the parties of opposition at the time. In the 1950s, the SPD continuously attacked Chancellor Adenauer's Ostpolitik (or rather the lack of one), without offering a viable alternative; similarly in the 1970s, when the CDU/CSU loudly criticised the social-liberal coalition's Ostpolitik for being too lenient on the East and making too many concessions.[538] For example, in April 1972, before the parliamentary ratification of the Eastern treaties, Rainer Barzel (Kiesinger's successor as the CDU's candidate for Chancellorship), had even invoked the 'constructive vote of no confidence' to oust Brandt. Barzel's attempt had failed narrowly. Here Wehner's role in Ostpolitik comes in crucial. When the opposition attempted to replace the government by means of a vote of no confidence, Wehner foiled the effort.[539]

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[536] See also von Dannenberg, *The Foundations of Ostpolitik*, p. 6.
[537] Sarotte, *Dealing*, p. 176.
[538] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 297.
[539] Thompson, *The Political Odyssey*, p. 11.

Wehner had been at the zenith of power in the 1960s and particularly during the great coalition.[540] As stressed by Thompson, the end of the coalition marked the decline of Wehner. Brandt had sought his advice less frequently.[541] Nonetheless, his decisive role as the chairman of the SPD parliamentary faction should not be undermined. In his memoirs, Helmut Schmidt highlighted that Wehner's contribution to Ostpolitik was largely underestimated in German public opinion. Moreover, and hereby Schmidt undermined Brandt's and Bahr's role in Ostpolitik, Wehner's political views towards the East had already been clear well before they developed the concept of 'change through rapprochement'.[542]

The SPD's German policy in the 1950s was unpopular because it confronted the population with an 'either or choice', much as it was unrealistic and somewhat utopian because it failed to take into account the given geopolitical circumstances and power policy interests. The SPD's new policy to the East was different. It was accompanied by a profound foreign policy reassessment and marked a complete U-turn to any of the party's previous (official) foreign policies. The SPD's Ostpolitik was largely supported by the population because it presented no disadvantages for the FRG (if at all, it offered economic advantages due to increased trade with the East), was developed from within the (military) security of the Western Alliance and ultimately offered West Germany a greater say in international affairs. It no longer 'traded' military security for reunification.

Electoral results of 1969 and 1972 confirmed the popularity of the SPD's chosen course. [543] The election outcome of 1972 was by many commentators seen as a referendum on the government's Ostpolitik since 1969, not least by the SPD itself.[544]

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[540] See also Meyer who stressed that Wehner had great influence on Kiesinger, especially in light of the FRG's German policy, in *Herbert Wehner*, p. 299.
[541] Thompson, *The Political Odyssey*, p. 313.
[542] Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte*, pp. 29-30.
[543] See Appendix 4.
[544] By deciding to agree on the basic treaty with the GDR on the one hand but postponing its ratification in parliament until after the election on the other, the SPD/FDP themselves contributed to the election's character as a plebiscite on Ostpolitik.

Then again, it is not too likely that a national election is won on foreign policy issues exclusively. Elections in general are not won on foreign policy issues. Brandt's Ostpolitik may have been endorsed by the majority of the population, but few thought it as important as the economy, an issue that presides over foreign policy matters in national elections in general.[545] Opinion polls confirmed this. On the question of Germany's most important political problems, respondents considered the economy as considerably more important than Ostpolitik in 1972/1973. In the election year of 1972, the economy was seen as the most salient political issue by 42 percent of the respondents, Germany's Ostpolitik only by 16 percent.[546] Although opinion poll results are to be used carefully, they nonetheless provide some useful insight in general political trends.

The economy was almost the only campaign platform for the CDU/CSU during the 1972 national elections, as the Conservatives had little substantial alternative to offer in contrast to Brandt's successful Eastern policy. Did the SPD seek to make a deal with the Soviet Union that would be detrimental to Western interests? At election times, the CDU/CSU opposition played with these underlying anxieties and negative perceptions of Ostpolitik. Some aspects of the Conservatives' propaganda bordered on the hysterical, attempting to brand the SPD as Marxist and bringing, via Ostpolitik, Germany's subjugation to Moscow.[547] The CDU/CSU failed to attract voters over domestic policy issues and consequently used the debate over the coalitions' East and German policy for attacks in the election campaign, whilst the faction in parliament itself was highly divided over the Eastern treaties.[548]

Despite these attacks, the SPD clearly won the 1972 national elections which was a vindication of Ostpolitik and seen as a clear mandate to continue the foreign policy course.

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[545] Padgett, Burkett, *Political Parties*, p. 221.
[546] *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung 1968-1973*, Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (ed.) (Allensbach, Bonn: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1974), p. 505.
[547] Padgett, Burkett, *Political Parties*, p. 222.
[548] Huber, *Die Bundestagswahlkämpfe*, p. 37.

Much of its success was owed to the fact that it allowed for the specific security interests of Germany's neighbours and left untouched the specific rights of the former Allies over the city of Berlin.

It is subject of historical controversy whether Brandt had discussed his individual steps towards the East with the United States in advance. Some argue that Brandt had not fully kept Washington informed of the developments in Ostpolitik.[549] Others assert that there is no evidence to support the thesis that the SPD's Ostpolitik was inadequately coordinated with the West.[550] Even if individual steps were not all *a priori* coordinated with the United States, the crucial point is that no substantial evidence exists that Ostpolitik ran counter US foreign policy interests or had not been fully endorsed by the Americans. For instance, the recommendations of the Harmel report agreed in December 1967, stipulating that the Atlantic Alliance should henceforth have the dual objective of security and détente, were fully in line with Brandt's thinking.[551] More importantly, it is difficult to imagine that the SPD could have conducted its own policies towards the East had they ran counter superpower interests. Ostpolitik was so successful precisely because it was complementary to and in the interest of all sides involved. Of course the reasons that led to a superpower convergence of interests were fundamentally diverse: the Americans, to whom a stronger and united Europe presented a challenge and benefit alike, were involved in their own battle in Vietnam. Ostpolitik promised to reduce the burden of commitment in Western Europe considerably. A strategy of détente (and Ostpolitik as a German contribution to it) would make it possible to reconcile an overall reduction of US international presence. Gaddis also suggested that Nixon and Kissinger quickly realised that Ostpolitik could fit within a wider strategy: economic

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[549] See, for example, Niedhart who stressed that Bahr went to Washington in order to deliver a message, not to ask for advice or permission. During the first weeks of the Brandt government, Western diplomats unanimously criticised the lack of information; see Niedhart, 'Ostpolitik and its impact on the Federal Republic's relationship with the West', p. 121. See also John W. Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-89. A Political History* (London: Edward Arnold, 1991), p. 18.

[550] Karl Kaiser, 'The New Ostpolitik', in Wolfram F. Hanrieder (ed.), *West German Foreign Policy: 1949-1979* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980), p. 147.

[551] Garthoff, *Détente*, p. 110.

necessity could combine with the opening to China to push the Soviet Union into negotiations with the United States on a range of issues, such as limiting strategic arms and increasing East-West trade.[552] For the Soviets, the treaty packages as embraced in Ostpolitik, marked essential steps toward the much desired European security conference, for which Moscow had been pushing since the middle of the 1950s in order to legitimise the European territorial and political status quo, and to reduce American influence in Europe.[553]

A change of leadership took place in 1974. Brandt resigned from office in the aftermath of a spy scandal that had become public. In April 1974, Brandt's personal assistant, Günter Guillaume, was arrested for espionage. In the following two weeks, Brandt's resignation had been discussed internally and in May 1974 Schmidt became chancellor. Brandt ultimately stumbled over the Guillaume affair, but his leadership had been weakened since the second Brandt/Scheel cabinet from 1972 onwards. There is little substantial disagreement in the Brandt historiography on this. The Guillaume affair is worth mentioning for two reasons. Internally, it was used by the various players involved to bring their own interests to the fore. Thompson convincingly argues that Brandt's leadership steadily weakened between 1972 and 1974 and Wehner, as well as Schmidt, withdrew their support and ultimately sought to replace the chancellor.[554] Schmidt, part of the Brandt-Wehner-Schmidt troika, had been ready to replace Brandt for some time and his taking over of chancellorship was largely undebated in the SPD.[555]

Secondly, the SPD's foreign policy course did not change with the new leadership. There exists a rather large consensus amongst historians that Schmidt's course was more pragmatic

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[552] John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War. A New History* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 154.
[553] Wolfram F. Hanrieder, 'West German Foreign Policy, 1949-1979: Necessities and Choices', p. 28.
[554] See Thompson, *The Political Odyssey*, p. 341 and p. 345; Merseburger, *Willy Brandt*, p. 658ff; Marshall, *Willy Brandt* (1993), p. 150ff. Of different opinion is Seebacher-Brandt, whose highly subjective and emotional biography on Brandt argues the resignation to be a well-calculated Wehner plot, see Seebacher, *Willy Brandt*, p. 262ff, p. 271ff.
[555] Thompson, *The Political Odyssey*, p. 341.

in style and that he tried to take the 'emotional steam out of Ostpolitik' (referring to Brandt's and Bahr's approaches).[556] This did not, however, imply that Schmidt's approach constituted a new way forward.[557] Over the next years, Schmidt fostered direct personal relations – while keeping away the wider public, his allies and even his own party – in dealing with East Berlin.[558] This took the form of direct contacts with Erich Honecker. As pointed out by Bange, one might call it a cynical course of history or simply Realpolitik, that the first tentative contact between Schmidt and Honecker took place on the day of Brandt's resignation.[559] In his memoirs, Schmidt recalled only five personal meetings with Honecker, besides numerous written correspondences and telephone conversations. Schmidt felt superior to Honecker and pitied him for his simplicity.[560]

The next important step in the history of relations between Bonn and East Berlin was the CSCE in Helsinki in August 1975.[561] It marked the multilateralisation of Ostpolitik.[562] Its main benefit was the reinforcement of the Four-Power agreement on Berlin, as the second basket of the CSCE's final document dealt with increased economic and technological cooperation. With regard to FRG-GDR relations, East Berlin was interested in limiting the impact of the CSCE on the GDR's system and to improve its steadily deteriorating foreign trade balance through trade with the FRG.[563] Relations with the GDR were therefore confined

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[556] Oliver Bange, '"Keeping détente alive"': inner-German relations under Helmut Schmidt and Erich Honecker, 1974-1982', in Leopoldo Nuti, (ed.), *The Crisis of Détente in Europe. From Helsinki to Gorbachev, 1975-1985* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 231.

[557] See also Judt, who argued that Schmidt never deviated from the general line of Ostpolitik, pursuing it not only in public diplomacy but also multiple links with the GDR, in *Postwar*, p. 498.

[558] Ibid.

[559] Ibid., p. 230.

[560] Schmidt, *Weggefährten*, pp. 504-505; Schmidt, *Ausser Dienst. Eine Bilanz* (München: Siedler, 2008), pp. 66-67.

[561] The CDU was notably one of the only Western European parties to object such a conference. On the issue see Schröder, 'Warum wir misstrauisch sind', in *Die Welt*, 5 July 1975, in AdSD 2/BTFG001790.

[562] Bahr, 'Willy Brandts europäische Außenpolitik', in Bahr, *Willy Brandts europäische Außenpolitik*, Heft 3, Bundeskanzler-Willy-Brandt-Stiftung (ed.) (Berlin: Schriftenreihe der Bundeskanzler-Willy-Brandt-Stiftung, 1999), p. 40. See also Karsten Voigt, 'Motive und Ziel der ersten und zweiten Ostpolitik der SPD', in *Kommune*, Forum für Politik und Ökonomie, No. 9 (September 1985), p. 41.

[563] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 340, p. 366. Bange, '"Keeping détente alive"', p. 232.

to direct diplomatic relations and not to inner-party SPD-SED relations. This is not surprising - given also the Conservative attacks the SPD saw itself confronted with.

The grand design of Ostpolitik was nothing less than a means to overcoming the status quo and undermining the Soviet empire by peaceful means in the long-term. Whereas the kind of static détente envisaged by the superpowers served to reinforce the status quo equilibrium, by formalising it with treaties, Ostpolitik – at least in the SPD's conceptual understanding of the term – tried to challenge the status quo. Sarotte, on the other hand, suggested that the amount of initiative the Germanies were showing and their desire to reshape the status quo should not be exaggerated.[564] Whereas this is likely to have been the case for the GDR, this cannot be maintained with regard to the SPD. The long-term aim was to overcome the division and firmly embed a united Germany in a reunited Europe. My analysis does not contradict with Sarotte's in the way that the FRG sought to emphasise, rather than diminish, its commitments to its allies on the way to achieving reunification. However, this does not imply that the Western military pact was the system the SPD envisaged for a reunited Germany (see Chapter 3).[565]

Ostpolitik was the German contribution to an active détente. Once consolidated, the practical implementation of Ostpolitik was not significantly influenced by superpower tension. Finally, it helped the FRG to reach 'maturity' and develop and implement foreign policy interests of its own. The fact that they were endorsed by all sides involved made them all the more successful.

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[564] Sarotte, *Dealing*, p. 175.
[565] Sarotte's argument on the matter in Ibid., p. 176.

8.) Eurocommunism and détente

Students of the Italian Communist Party and Eurocommunism often focus on an analysis of whether Eurocommunism could in fact have been regarded as a coherent ideological and political movement, what it precisely constituted of, its inherent flaws and why it had exactly failed to survive beyond the 1970s. Some commentators plainly dismiss it as an 'expression of doctrinal exhaustion' and that in order to achieve more it also needed to publicly abandon any association with Soviet communism itself.[566] Others highlight the electoral weaknesses and increasing factionalism of its main actors (most notably the Spanish Communist Party) as a contributing element to the failure of Eurocommunism, and that the PCI had become a largely isolated force amongst its Western European sister parties, after the PCF's brief flirtation with Eurocommunism had ended and the party returned to its former dogmatism.[567]

Eurocommunism, *if* perceived as a movement or platform of Western European likeminded communist parties, is largely overrated, whilst it is certainly tempting to highlight the idea of Eurocommunism as a true and genuine phenomenon that spread across Western Europe in the middle of the 1970s. Eurocommunism from an exclusively Italian perspective served as a platform to reinforce the PCI's more ambitious, national strategy, without which the historic compromise would have been, at least as far as the PCI's many critical observers in the West were concerned, less credible or conceivable. It was an expression of the PCI's national foreign policy.

Eurocommunism, *if* intended as a platform of Western European communist parties, in essence constituted of the Italian, Spanish and French communist parties and amounted only to a few joint declarations on the shared understanding and mutual perception of common principles. These were publicly reiterated during a number of gatherings between 1975 and 1977. For example, a joint declaration of the PCI and the PCF in November 1975 spoke in

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[566] Judt, *Postwar*, p. 496.
[567] Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, p. 264.

favour of 'a plurality of political parties, for the right to existence and activity of opposition parties, for free formation of majorities and minorities and the possibility of their alternating democratically, for the lay nature and democratic functioning of the State, for independence of the judiciary'.[568] As far as the PCI is concerned none of this was new.

Besides these common interests and declarations no 'mutual Eurocommunist platform' existed. It remained precisely what it - from a PCI perspective - intended to be: a loose, non-committal forum of debate amongst Western European communist parties that shared a mutual understanding of a certain (often vague and sometimes already existing) set of values such as democracy and pluralism, seeking convergences beyond fraternal parties and engage in dialogue with all European socialist, social-democratic and liberal democratic forces. It would have run counter the PCI's national interests if it had assumed the dimension of a new movement, let alone something of a regional direction centre amongst Western communist parties. Besides that, it would, even if simply from a geographical point of view, be a clear exaggeration to speak of a Eurocommunist movement. In essence it included the Communist Parties of Italy, France and Spain. What about those of Finland, Norway, Great Britain, Austria, Portugal and Greece? Would it not be necessary to enlarge the platform in mere geographical terms in order to speak of a truly Western European phenomenon? As such it had therefore failed. It should also be stressed that despite a mutual sharing of a certain set of values, the PCI and the PCF, for instance, had very different, and in some sense opposite, views on European strategy, détente and relations with Moscow. As far as national interests were concerned, their concepts of socialism lay far apart.[569] The expression of certain shared values bears little relation to the more profound programmatic divergences between the two communist parties.

However, to challenge the idea of the existence of a true European communist movement is not to deny that in the 1970s, communism had assumed a new and electorally strong appeal

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[568] As quoted in Sassoon, *The Italian Communists speak for themselves*, p. 67.
[569] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 363.

for and beyond the working class of Western Europe. The success of the PCI was the most open manifestation of this. Ever since the end of World War II, communism developed very successfully in the liberal, parliamentary environment in Italy. The success of the 1970s was owed much to the peculiarities of the Italian system itself, as expressed in the stagnation of the prevailing party system (i.e. its 'bipartismo imperfetto'), the corruption of the state system, the very nature of the DC itself – a party which had become increasingly identified with the corruption of the state – and the failure of the centre-left governments of the 1960s, to name only a few.

This is not a study of the achievements or flaws of the Eurocommunist movement. The key question here to address is not what precisely constituted Eurocommunism but what it *served* and *meant* in the specific Italian context. It served to give credibility to the PCI on its way to become a legitimate partner in Italian government. Eurocommunism was largely a national policy, a strategy that was a constituent part of the PCI's historic compromise, without which, the party's domestic policy would have lacked sufficient credibility.[570] Eurocommunism, together with the historic compromise formula and acceptance of NATO, gave the PCI a newly acquired international resonance that it never had in its entire history. The PCI's Eurocommunism and the strategy of the historic compromise thus go hand in hand. The legitimisation of the historic compromise in Italy would have to be achieved through an historic compromise at the European level. Granted that détente would not bring the dissolution of the blocs, it would at least favour their mutual opening and - in the PCI's interest - allow for greater internal diversity and autonomy as far as Italy was concerned. Eurocommunism was largely an Italian contribution to détente and a national policy to render the historic compromise more credible. The PCI needed to reassure the West of its democratic credentials – and for that a national platform did no longer suffice. Comparable with the SPD, the PCI sought partners in the West to implement a national strategy, a policy that could not

[570] See also Silvio Pons, 'Enrico Berlinguer e la riforma del comunismo. Il PCI, l'Europa e l'Unione Sovietica nella tarda guerra fredda', *Italianieuropei*, 06/07 (2004), p. 229.

ignore the security interests of Italy's Western neighbours. In many ways, both SPD and PCI pursued their national interests within a multilateralised policy. SPD and PCI did not follow an 'either' 'or' policy, but one that geared towards both détente and national interests – fully taking into consideration the given international circumstances and superpower interests.

In the Italian context, Eurocommunism as well as the PCI's prevailing domestic alliance strategy were far from a radical change in doctrine (as for instance in comparison with the PCF), and had in practice long existed before the term 'Eurocommunism' even surfaced.[571] The acceptance of parliamentary democracy and plurality of parties was not a novelty in the PCI's thinking. Ever since its rebirth in 1944 (with the turning-point of Salerno) the PCI's evolution occurred in the context of a parliamentary democracy. The abolition of it and its replacement by a one-party dictatorship had never been a party aim.

Eurocommunism served to give the party a new platform (and greater resonance if voiced with other parties) to articulate some of its long-term ideas and demands. At this stage it is worth remembering that the SPD's 'Bad Godesberg' followed a comparable logic. Much that was decided and voted upon in 1959 was not new. The alleged or de facto originality of the Bad Godesberg Programme did, however, not matter or at least only secondarily. More important was that the SPD represented itself as something new and distinct on the political market. Even more decisive, was that it served to legitimise the party as a national force and potential ally in government. To overstate the originality of the party's programme only served this purpose. Hence, it is worth drawing a parallel between the SPD's Bad Godesberg and the PCI's Eurocommunism in as far as both followed a similar logic and interest.

A word should also be said about why this tendency to reform communism - perhaps a more accurate characterisation of what was to varying extents pronounced by the three Western communist parties - had evolved. The coming to terms of Western European communism

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[571] See also Sidney Tarrow, 'Historic compromise or bourgeois majority? Eurocommunism in Italy, 1976-9', in Howard Machin (ed.), *National Communism in Western Europe: a third way to socialism?* (London and New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 124.

with the institutions of representative democracy can be explained as a result of various interrelating factors; the contradictions between the premises of Marxism and the reality of Western European capitalist development; the dynamics of party and electoral competition; the international context in which the reality of political-military blocs and the crisis of Eastern communism merit special attention (the crisis of 1968), all of which in fact illustrate that the PCI's political development in those areas well preceded the development of what has generally been ascribed to Eurocommunism around 1976.[572]

For the PCI, it represented the search for a 'third way to socialism', dismissing the Soviet model as adequate for Italy while attempting to go beyond European social democracy. In seeking an Italian 'terza via' (third way), the PCI sought strategic alliances (as well as convergences amongst communist and social democratic parties) beyond the national borders; it was a concept that affected the party's domestic and international policies alike. As far as economic integration with Western Europe was concerned, the PCI had already engaged in a process of policy re-thinking in the 1960s, coming to the conclusion that the party's foreign policy interests were not necessarily and no longer identical with those of the Soviet Union. Specific and new economic problems needed solutions beyond national borders and partners - even if they departed from diverse ideological backgrounds.

The Berlin conference of Western and Eastern European communist parties held in June 1976 was the most outspoken and unequivocal manifestation of the PCI's autonomist course. It left little doubt about the PCI's relation with the international communist movement and the direction of the latter in the eyes of the Italian Communists. The fact that there was a conference at all and a joint document produced may be seen as a success for the Soviet

[572] See also Ignacio Walker, 'Democratic Socialism in Comparative Perspective', *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (July 1991), p. 439.

Union and the centralist view.[573] The content of the final document, its non-binding nature, including the strong emphasis on independence and autonomy for each party as well as the absence of a clear reference point (i.e. Moscow's vanguard line) marked a clear triumph for the autonomist course. In fact the consultative character of the meeting as well as the broad nature of the final document had been a prerequisite for the PCI to attend the conference. In many ways it seemed as if the PCI wished these conferences of communist parties to be no more than a consultative meeting or no more than a mere debating club, which every member is free to join (or to resign from) at any time. Berlinguer even asserted that the conference was not a 'riunione di un organismo internazionale comunista', that is, not a meeting of the international communist organisation as such, which could not exist, neither on a global nor a European level, but a free encounter of autonomous and equal parties.[574] Special emphasis was made by Berlinguer on the fact that the debate took place openly and in public. Whereas until the middle of the 1960s, the international communist movement was still the most important reference point for the PCI, this had drastically changed in the 1970s. One may ask why the PCI attended the meeting at all if it so rigorously opposed regional or international communist conferences and insisted on the non-binding character of the final document. Most plausibly, the PCI deliberately used the open and public platform to stress its independent and autonomous positions. The fact that the timing of the conference coincided with the government-formation process after the crucial Italian national elections of 1976 underlines this argument.

In the middle of the 1970s, the PCI's greatest concern was to prove its democratic legitimacy to become a party of government vis-à-vis its domestic and international adversaries, and to

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[573] See also Pierre Hassner, 'The PCI, Eurocommunism, and Universal Reconciliation: The International Dimension of the Golden Dream, 1975-1979', in Simon Serfaty, Lawrence Gray (eds), *The Italian Communist Party. Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (London: Aldwych Press, 1980), pp. 215-216.

[574] Berlinguer, 'L'intervento di Berlinguer: I lavori della conferenza di partiti comunisti e operai d'Europa', in *L'Unità*, 1 July 1976, p. 1.

reassure the party's opponents that in the event of the PCI coming to power. it would not in the slightest modify Italy's position in the international camp.[575]

The PCI's attendance at the conference in June 1976 was thus used as an open platform to reiterate its distinctiveness and unequivocal autonomy from Moscow (as certainly 'all eyes' were turned to the PCI at the conference in the aftermath Italy's elections), especially in light of the growing concern in Western Europe about the PCI's proposal of an historic compromise and the party's electoral advances. The Berlin declarations of the PCI should, however, not be dismissed as tactical manoeuvres, but illustrated again that the PCI's international proclamations were inseparably linked with the strategy of the historic compromise at home.

The fate (and subsequent demise) of Eurocommunism was inevitably, and inseparably linked with that of Italian communism. Analysing the failure of Eurocommunism most certainly involves addressing the more crucial question as to why Western European communist parties failed to present a genuine alternative to social democratic parties in Western Europe, and collapsed with the demise of Soviet communism at the beginning of the 1990s. Although promoting a distinct model of socialism in Western Europe, the fate of communist parties in the West, and as such, the PCI was inextricably linked with that of their sister parties in the East. From a PCI perspective, Eurocommunism aimed to make clear that its goal was to reform, not to overthrow the capitalist order in Western Europe, by demonstrating that its first loyalty was to the existing order in Italy and not to the Soviet leadership. Even if unintentional and if denied by the PCI itself, it was a political rapprochement with social democracy. From this, could only but follow the logical question of what would occur beyond Eurocommunism. With hindsight, one could argue that the social-democratisation of the PCI more than a decade later. was its natural implication.

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[575] Sassoon, 'La sinistra in Italia e in Europa', p. 14.

The German Social Democrats observed the Eurocommunist trend with great interest, attention and scepticism[576] – the latter being the result of specific German experiences with communism, the forced merger of SPD into the SED in East Germany, Germany's geopolitical situation, as well as their common tradition of mutual suspicion and antipathy.[577] Since the beginning of the Cold War, and coinciding with the merger of the Eastern SPD into SED, the SPD went to great length to firmly and unequivocally disassociate itself from communism. This was henceforth practiced by the SPD, although towards the end of the 1960s and with the 'opening to the East', strategically somewhat less rigorously. In this context, the SPD had entered organisational rapports with the PCI, on a strictly 'informative level' since 1967. Severe Conservative attacks on the SPD (in light of Ostpolitik) induced the party to stress and clearly avoid any association with communist parties, particularly during electoral campaign periods.

9.) The PCI in search for a 'new internationalism': Italian communism between East and West

The outside observer may justifiably raise the question as to what sort of party the PCI by the mid-1970s had in fact been. On the one hand, the party stressed its national and distinct character, endorsed Europe and most of its integration projects. It had accepted NATO, had unambiguously condemned the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and yet still remained a communist party, even if primarily a national one and only secondarily as an integral component of the world communist movement. On the other hand, the PCI's nature in

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[576] Willy Brandt, *Zum Verhältnis von Sozialdemokratie und Kommunismus*, SPD (ed.), New Edition, (Bonn 1971), p. 16.
[577] See also Horst Ehmke, introduction, in Timmermann (ed.), *Eurokommunismus. Fakten, Analysen, Interviews* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1978), p. 8.

the mid to late 1970s can in many ways only be ascribed as ambivalent. This ambivalence was utilised by Western critics to deny the PCI any prospects of governmental responsibility. Some undeniably existing contradictions in the PCI's nature led Western observers to the somewhat simplified and premature conclusion that the PCI's reassurances were tactically motivated or not to be trusted. Even so, it should be underlined that ambivalence and genuineness are not necessarily mutually incompatible.

As pointed out by Barth Urban, by 1976 the organisational implications of Togliatti's 1956 discussion of polycentrism had become an integral part of the PCI doctrine under the rubric of a 'new internationalism', the crux of which was the insistence on individual communist party autonomy, on the priority of national party interests over the communist world in general.[578] By the middle of the 1970s, the PCI's international relations were thus marked by the concept of 'new internationalism', the foreign and security policy basis of which was a critical but constructive option for the West.[579] The concept of 'new internationalism' replaced the by then (long) outdated notion of 'proletarian internationalism', a limited concept no longer applicable to the given realities.[580] Both Eurocommunism and new internationalism were specific designs of the PCI.

The PCI's new internationalism (in essence a new concept of inter-state relations based on unequivocal autonomy of all communist parties) challenged the CPSU's formula of proletarian internationalism, according to which national party interests should be subordinated to the interests of the communist world, as solely and exclusively defined by Moscow.[581] The PCI's new concept cannot be separated from the party's ambition to enter Italian government within the framework of the historic compromise and the establishment of

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[578] Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, p. 251.
[579] See also Heinz Timmermann, *The Decline of the World Communist Movement. Moscow, Beijing, and Communist Parties in the West* (Boulder, London: Westview Press, 1987), p. 143.
[580] See also Sergio Segre,'Lineamenti per una storia dell "eurocomunismo"', in Sergio Segre (ed.), *A Chi Fa Paura l'Eurocommunismo?* (Firenze: Guaraldi Editore, 1977), p. 19.
[581] Urban, *Moscow*, p. 251.

a third way of socialism. The idea of a 'new internationalism' displaced and went beyond the former concept of internationalism that had been endorsed by the PCI. In the 1960s. prior to the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia, the Italian Communists had already developed a rather loose concept of a 'new kind of international unity capable of strictly securing the autonomy of each party and of not implying a hostile attitude towards those parties which did not agree with issues of common decision'.[582] It had been the concept as entailed in 'unity in diversity', which, however, had avoided any critical assessment of the nature of the Soviet system and still identified American imperialism as the common enemy. The PCI's foreign policy of the mid-1970s went far beyond that. It was accompanied by a strategic reappraisal of PCI positions vis-à-vis the Atlantic Alliance, by a replacement of its former notion of Italy's withdrawal from NATO, and strongly and inextricably linked to the cause of détente.

Intransigent anti-Atlanticism was no longer practised (nor considered desirable) and the PCI opted instead for a critical but unequivocal acceptance of NATO. The PCI had even argued that its own road to socialism could only be implemented in the West; the party was no longer willing to sacrifice its own national objectives on the altar of Soviet foreign policy interests. The PCI's process of political disengagement from the Soviet Union had, however, been more pragmatic rather than ideological. It was realised that too close an identification with Moscow (and Soviet military foreign policy as well as the international communist movement) was an impediment to the PCI's national objectives.[583] Acceptance of NATO also had a mere pragmatic purpose. It did not derive from a sudden shift to 'Atlanticism' and enthusiasm of its military shield, but from the recognition that there was simply no other choice if the party wished to enter Italian government without awaiting the end of Cold War hostilities.

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[582] Longo's speech at the final meeting of the Central Committee, in *Foreign Bulletin* (February-March 1967), p. 36.

[583] From the spring of 1978, the PCI also criticised the Soviet military presence in Africa and began to support the Eritrean liberation movement in their armed uprising against Soviet involvement in Ethiopia. See Odd Arne Westad, 'Beginnings of the end. How the Cold War crumbled', in Silvio Pons, Federico Romero (eds), *Reinterpreting the End of the Cold War* (London and New York: Frank Cass, 2005), p. 72.

In the second half of the 1970s, the PCI had become much more of a non-class based party – at least electorally speaking – and significant electoral advances were made and national prestige gained. The party succeeded to accumulate voters well beyond its traditional Marxist subculture. The PCI's pragmatic and non-ideological detachment from the Soviet Union manifested itself also in official (and non official) declarations. In the aftermath of the Polish crisis over dealing with Solidarność, the PCI's disengagement from Moscow had reached a temporary climax and gained new momentum. The PCI's resolution on Poland (as issued by the party's Direzione)[584] unequivocally condemned the military coup in Poland and the suppression of all political, trade union and social organisations.[585] The Polish crisis itself cannot be, so the PCI leadership argued, attributed to any manoeuvres of reactionary forces hostile to socialism, which had presented a popular rationale explaining the Hungarian events of 1956 and justified the Soviet military reaction to it.[586] So far the PCI's declaration and reaction to the Polish events resembled those of 1968.

The condemnation of the Soviet suppression was, however, for the first time accompanied by a critical, albeit still somewhat ambivalent, analysis of the Soviet system. The PCI declared that 'this phase of socialist development (which began with the October Revolution) has exhausted its driving force'.[587] It was asserted that the 'great historical experience has revealed its limits, contradictions and mistakes that weighed on the internal, economic and political life of every country, above all with regards to democracy (...) and on the relations

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[584] The resolution on Poland was adopted with one abstention (Cappelloni) and one vote against (Cossutta). See Carlo Galluzzi, *La svolta*, p. 258.
[585] Enrico Berlinguer, *After Poland. Towards a New Internationalism. Enrico Berlinguer with the decisions and resolutions of the Communist Party of Italy*, Antonio Bronda, Stephen Bodington (eds) (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1982), p. 13.
[586] Ibid., p. 17.
[587] Berlinguer, 'Dopo i fatti di Polonia', 15 December 1981, in Antonio Tatò (ed.), *Conversazione con Berlinguer* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1984), p. 271. See also Enrico Berlinguer, *After Poland*, p. 16.

between the various socialist countries, limiting the attraction of the ideals of socialism in the world'.[588]

Soviet foreign policies were also seen to damage the much endorsed European détente and not least to imperil the party's national ambitions and diminish party popularity at home. The PCI correctly assessed that the 'crisis of the socialist societies in the East puts at stake détente, liberty, democracy and so (thus) it is a matter of direct and important concern to us (the PCI)'.[589] Nonetheless, the PCI avoided 'to complete' its criticism of the Soviet system (and thus bearing all the consequences and implications of a thorough rupture with the Soviet state), by stressing that although the 'historical phase as opened by the October revolution in Russia is ended; we are not at all dismissing the value of achievements realised in that phase. To dismiss everything to do with the October Revolution as a sort of original sin would be absurd.'[590] It seemed as if the PCI had to always, no matter how far its criticism of the Soviet Union went, to balance any critical evaluation with simultaneous praise for Soviet achievements.

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[588] 'Tesi del XV Congresso Nazionale', 30 March-3 April 1979, in PCI (ed.), *Da Gramsci a Berlinguer. La via italiana al socialismo attraverso i congressi del partito comunista italiano V 1976*-1984 (Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 1985), p. 116.
[589] Berlinguer, *After Poland*, p. 37. See also 'Tesi del XV Congresso Nazionale', p. 116.
[590] Berlinguer, *After Poland*, p. 37.

Chapter 6
Part I

The Italian elections of 1975/1976, the Puerto Rico summit and Western fears of the PCI

1.) Italy and International Scene

In the mid-1970s, Western Europe was haunted by it again – the ghost. It came in the new disguise of Eurocommunism, but spread as much concern and alarm as at earlier appearances. At least so in the eyes of some Western European and American leaders who were busily engaged in conjuring the danger of this newly disguised version (Eurocommunism) and its' haunting in Italy, Spain and France.

By the beginning to mid-1970s, international and domestic circumstances had been most favourable for the pronouncement of the historic compromise and a PCI overture towards the DC. The urgency of domestic circumstances seemed to bring participation in government within reach, and international circumstances, if well exploited, seemed to render favourable space for the PCI in the domestic political setting. As previously analysed, the Italian political system had arrived at an impasse. Contributing to the Western Allies' rising concern were developments within the DC and their search for coalitions partners. The centre-left governments with the Socialists had failed. The centrist government was electorally too weak to govern the country. Thus, as Sassoon put it, the DC was at a dead end and was more amenable to compromise with the PCI.[591] It was a political stalemate which compelled the DC, for electoral reasons, to consider coalition alternatives. The DC faced a serious electoral challenge from the PCI, and due to a lack of coalition options could no longer ignore the

[591] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 576.

overtures from the Communists. Helmut Schmidt, for example, blamed the DC's failure to politically and socially reform the country for the PCI's rising success.[592]

Adding to this concern was the situation of the Italian Socialists. The Socialist leader De Martino openly endorsed closer collaboration with the PCI. The collapse of the centre-left coalitions, the prospect of closer PCI-PSI relations and an ever increasing support for the PCI therefore led to a re-thinking within the DC. Further to this was the divorce referendum held in 1974. The May 1974 plebiscite over the divorce law had been interpreted as a clear defeat for the DC and as a manifestation of the weakening DC monopoly in Italy.[593]

The Christian Democrats were forced to face the 'communist problem' and began to debate a strategy on how to best encounter the challenge from the Left. Two political factions began to emerge within the DC. The first, promoted by a group around Fanfani, aimed at continuing the path of the 'moderate' center-left and emphasised the limits of détente by recalling the Soviet invasion of Prague and underplaying the relevance of the PCI's opposition to it.[594] The second developed mainly around Moro and Zaccagnini, who tended to perceive the elections of 1975 and 1976 as a demonstration of an altering political scene in Italy and proposed a dialogue with the PCI.[595]

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[592] Interview with Helmut Schmidt on German television (*Panorama)*, 2 February 1976, re-printed in H. Timmermann, *Wohin marschiert die Linke in Europa?* (Freiburg, Würzburg: Ploetz, 1979), p. 95.

[593] The result of the referendum of 12 May 1974 marked a clear triumph in favour of the divorce law by 59.1 percent against 40.9 percent. At least as far as this issue was concerned, traditionalist Catholic hegemony had been seriously and successfully challenged. On the subject see Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, pp. 349-351.

[594] Roberto Gualtieri, 'The Italian political system and détente (1963-1981)', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2004), p. 433.

[595] Gualtieri suggested that in 1974 the debacle on the referendum against divorce (which showed the deep impact of the social and cultural transformations of the 1960s, and the climate of détente) and the outbreak of the balance of payments crisis, encouraged the DC's leadership to abandon Fanfani's line. Aldo Moro, the main advocate of the dialogue with the PCI, once again became the head of the cabinet (Dec. 1974) and then elected his right-hand man Zaccagnini to the Party's Secretariat (July 1975); see Roberto Gualtieri, 'The Italian political system and détente (1963-1981)', p. 438. See also Tarrow, 'Historic compromise or bourgeois majority? Eurocommunism in Italy 1976-9', p. 130.

American and Western European fears about a communist advance in Italy had accelerated during 1975 and culminated with the Italian general elections the following year. Western concern of the PCI was of course partly explicable in terms of the growing strength of the party itself. The PCI could no longer be ignored. Compared to the 1972 elections, the PCI managed to gain votes in the 1975 regional elections. The Socialist leader De Martino had agreed to join the PCI in the creation of left-wing local and regional administrations. In the national elections in June 1976, the Italian political system reached its zenith of political bipolarisation.[596] German national press had dedicated an enormous amount of attention to the developments in Italy in the run up to the national elections. Though retrospectively we know that what eventually emerged was a DC-led government which had to rely on the PCI's (as well as that of the other parties including the PSI) benevolent abstention in parliament, Western reactions and initiatives prior to the Italian national elections and the government-formation in August 1976 will be examined.[597]

The Eurocommunist trend at its peak, the PCI's increasing popularity combined with a stagnation of the Italian political system, thus generated growing concern amongst Western European leaders and in the United States. The Italian election results of 1975/1976 only underlined this trend even further. On an international level, both superpowers had been engaged in a process of détente whose outcome seemed rather promising by the mid-1970s. The 'strategy of détente' reduced the military tensions between the 'two Europe' and with the much desired convocation of the CSCE in 1975, the multilateral phase of détente had reached a temporary climax. This is important in as much as it allowed the PCI a maximum flexibility to launch new initiatives at home which seemed to be most viable due to the transitory phase

[596] For the 1976 polls see Appendix 3.

[597] On 11 August 1976, a new government under the leadership of Giulio Andreotti gained the approval of the Chamber of Deputies. It was named the government of 'non sfiducia' ('not no-confidence') because it was based on the abstention of the opposition parties. The Communists and the Socialists were not part of the government, but they agreed not to cause its downfall.

of a relaxation of superpower tensions. This would at least minimally dampen anti-communist resentments in Italy and across Western Europe. As argued before, the PCI's historic compromise was essentially a means of legitimisation. It entailed both the domestic and international strategy to full governmental legitimisation. The Italian Communists had to reassure its Western adversaries that no intrinsic danger would derive from them in the event of a share of power. The inherent idea was to find a means to not only compromise anti-communism at home, but to find a viable strategy for a communist participation in government that would not increase fears and risk interference from abroad. At least so it was hoped.

2.) Western fears and the PCI

The 'compromesso storico' not only rapidly became a widely discussed political initiative in Italy and abroad, but one which, in conjunction with the PCI's electoral evolution in 1975/76, generated significant concern amongst Western European leaders. It became clear that détente in international affairs ran parallel to excessive anti-communism in domestic affairs.

German press - left wing and conservative alike - devoted a large amount of attention to the Italian domestic political situation, the foreign policy implications of the historic compromise (i.e. PCI participation in government), the PCI's attitude towards the Atlantic Alliance and its ambivalent identity and relations with the CPSU in the course of 1975/76. In short, Western observers were busy to ascertain the 'true' nature and intentions of the Italian Communist Party.

Between January and June 1976, the impact of Eurocommunism, the question and consequences of a PCI entry in government and the nature of the PCI's objectives were addressed and debated weekly (if not daily) in most of Germany's national press.[598] The SPD's weekly *Vorwärts* also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of PCI governmental participation, often also in the context of the SPD's own confrontation with communism. Some authors highlighted the loosening of West European communist parties from the rigidity of Soviet style communism and its effect on the Eastern bloc, which, so it was argued, presented social democratic parties with challenges and chances alike.[599] In a considerable number of articles in various newspapers and journals, Heinz Timmermann assessed the changes within the PCI (as well as those of the PCF and Spanish Communist Party (PCE)), the developments within the Eurocommunist movement, the PCI's perception of Soviet style communism and amount of autonomy from Moscow. Timmermann concluded that while undoubtedly the proclamations of Western European communist parties have to be examined critically, this should not prevent (us) from looking also at the present realities and developments of these parties.[600] Others stressed that although the degree of militancy and pro-Sovietism in the PCI had always been difficult to ascertain, most party members only grudgingly accepted the historic compromise as a necessary tactical means in order to enter government. To many Western observers and journalists, the PCI's basis remained fundamentally Stalinist, the party's leadership reform-oriented.[601] Accordingly, this implied that the PCI leadership could never be truly independent from Moscow. As long as there were still enormous internal and external constraints the PCI would always also have to account for

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[598] German press coverage on Italian domestic affairs was enormous. Almost daily attention was paid to Italian domestic developments and the 'Communist Question'. To mention only a few, see, for instance, *Münchener Merkur*, 'KPI für "Neue Linke" mit SPD', 4 March 1976; *FAZ*, 'Was Italiens Kommunisten wollen', 25 March 1976; *FAZ*, 'Die zwei Gesichter Berlinguers', 9 April 1976; *SZ*, 'Was von Italiens KP zu erwarten ist', 22 April 1976; *Vorwärts*, 'Wir Kommunisten sind für den Profit' (Interview with Amendola), 17 June 1976.

[599] See, for instance, *Vorwärts*, Georg Scheuer, 'Vom Umgang mit Kommunisten', 29 January 1976.

[600] See, for instance, Heinz Timmermann, 'Westeuropas Kommunisten', *Schweizer Monatshefte* (December 1975), pp. 702-723, re-printed in Depositum Helmut Schmidt in AdSD, 1/HS AA007930.

[601] *Vorwärts*, Petra Rosenbaum, 'Wie demokratisch sind Italiens Kommunisten?', 18 March 1976.

the party's more militant rank and file. This in turn would run counter PCI reassurances of its democratic credentials.

The West expressed its concern about the impact a PCI participation in government might have on the other Mediterranean countries and the Atlantic Alliance.[602] A number of scholars dealt with the repercussions on NATO in the event of a PCI inclusion in government, stressing that this would automatically raise the issue of having PCI members in NATO committees and hence, with access to sensitive information.[603] Others held that it would be reasonable to argue that leftist governments in Western Europe may have a debilitating effect on Atlantic relations and on the security functions in NATO. Americans logically feared that the European communists might divulge key military plans to Moscow, after all, changes in PCI policy towards Italian membership in NATO were still unsatisfactory.[604]

Henry Kissinger predicted that 'NATO might become a predominantly German-American alliance for lack of other partners in the event of Eurocommunist participation in the other national (West European) governments'.[605] Western politicians conjured up the danger for NATO in the event of a communist participation in Italy. The military bases in Italy were seen vital to the strategy of the United States and NATO in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Kissinger even hinted that in the event of a communist participation in government, the US Senate would, sooner or later, demand American troop reductions from Europe.[606] In December 1975 Kissinger retained that 'it was inconceivable that the US could maintain

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[602] For example, Bruno Friedrich, member of the SPD's Executive and foreign policy spokesman of the SPD's parliamentary faction, emphasised in an interview on 31 January 1976 the consequences for NATO if the PCI entered government. This implied Italy's dropping out of NATO, which would consequently affect the military balance in the Mediterranean, in AdSD, 'SPD-Bundestagsfraktion', 7. Wahlperiode, 2/BTFG001538.

[603] Robert E. Osgood, 'The PCI, Italy and NATO', in Simon Serfaty and Lawrence Gray (eds), *The Italian Communist Party. Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (London: Aldwych Press, 1980), p. 152.

[604] Michael M. Harrison, 'The PCI and other Eurocommunist Parties: Implications for Atlantic Relations', in S. Serfaty, L. Gray (eds), *The Italian Communist Party. Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, p. 160 and pp. 173-174.

[605] As quoted by Schoch, 'Eurocommunism and Defence: Do Western European Communists Feel Threatened by the Soviet Union? The Case of Italy', p. 25.

[606] Henry Kissinger at the NATO Council meeting in Oslo, 15 May 1976, in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (subsequently Politisches Archiv des AA), Bestand B 150, Band 348.

ground forces in Europe if there was major communist participation in Western governments'.[607]

The concern about the future of the bases after a PCI entry in government, at least officially, mostly determined Western foreign policy vis-à-vis the PCI and Eurocommunism.[608] Conflicting interests within NATO and an occurring imbalance in the Mediterranean were held to be the official reasons of Western European leaders in 1975/76 and served as an official explanation to their opposition to a PCI entry in government. However, no unanimous agreement existed on what positions to take regarding the advance of communist parties in Western Europe. A discrepancy also often existed between the various national ministries. For national security reasons, defence ministries are bound to take a harder line than the diplomats of the foreign ministries or local embassies. With regard to the security threat that was conjured up by NATO and the US, a statement by the British Foreign Office declared that 'the community is already something of a sieve and that we should not exaggerate the significance of possible access by the Communists to confidential information'.[609]

Recently published archival documents allegedly confirm that the British government considered backing a rightwing coup in Italy in 1976 in order to prevent the Italian Communist Party from taking power. Foreign office planners wrote in May 1976 that 'a clean surgical coup to remove the Communists from power would be attractive in many ways'.[610] An analysis of the relevant archival documents (on the alleged British backed coup) reveals that 'the consideration of extreme measures such as external military intervention or the encouragement of repressive measures in Italy, possibly backed by the threat of Western military intervention, to outlaw the Communists and to shore up a non-Communist regime,

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[607] The National Archives, Kew, FCO 33/2947.
[608] William Griffith, '"L'eurocomunismo": sarà il terzo grande scisma comunista? La rivalità fra URSS e USA nell'Europa meridionale', in Sergio Segre (ed), *A Chi Fa Paura l'Eurocomunismo?*, p. 177.
[609] The National Archives, CAB 133/467.
[610] See *The Guardian*, 14 January 2008, referring to documents from the British national archives as published in the Italian daily *La Repubblica*.

was ruled out'.[611] What had indeed been discussed was the possibility of a coup d'état by the Italian armed forces in the event of the PCI entering government. Officials in the British defence ministry had, however, come to the conclusion that 'Communist participation in the next Italian government is likely to be accepted by the Armed forces and that a right wing coup is scarcely conceivable'.[612]

This further highlights the extent to which an enormous, largely unfounded, fear of Western communist parties was created and developed into some kind of hysteria within Western European diplomatic circles in 1975/1976.

Hence, the prospect of a PCI entry in government was explicitly discussed in Italian, Western European and American diplomatic circles. But the growing support of Western European communist parties in general, and the PCI in particular, also caused tensions between American, Italian and the other European allies and led to controversial discussions between the members of the Atlantic Alliance - controversial as to how the communist advance in Italy could be most effectively detained.[613] Interestingly, as we will see with respect to the course of developments, during a meeting between officials of the FDP-led German Foreign Ministry discussing further operational proposals with regard to the political situation in Italy, it was suggested that the deteriorating economic situation in Italy would in fact only strengthen the Communists. Hence it was suggested that everything possible had to be done to support Italy economically and monetarily and to meet her wishes in this respect.[614]

The course of the developments in 1975 and 1976 had been thoroughly observed by Western European and American ambassadors and was subject of concern within the SPD-FDP

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[611] The National Archives, FCO 33/2947.
[612] The National Archives, FCO 33/2949.
[613] *L'Italia nella politica internazionale*, 1975-1976, (Istituto Affari Internazionali: Edizioni di comunità, 1977), p. 12.
[614] German foreign ministry meeting, chaired by Hermes, the state secretary in the ministry, 6 May 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 347.

governing coalition. On a governmental, bilateral level, meetings were held between Schmidt, Genscher, Ford and Kissinger[615] and numerous internal papers specifying the position of the federal government vis-à-vis the Western European communist parties were written[616]. Conversations on how to diminish the PCI's growing popularity had also taken place between Schmidt and Callaghan as well as between Genscher and the British Prime Minister.[617]

Adding to the growing concern about the PCI's electoral success was the re-emergence of the Communist Parties of Spain, Portugal and Greece. In the mid 1970s, the three remaining authoritarian regimes of Southern Europe collapsed. In all three countries, the Communist parties were legalised and immediately gained prestige. In 1974-1975 the SPD, and to some extent the Socialist International, supplied the Portuguese Socialist Party (PSP) with financial and moral support; enough to permit the party to re-establish itself.[618] A failure to do so, it was held, might consequently contribute to the success of the Communists in Portugal. A communist advance in the Mediterranean would, according to Schmidt, have destabilised the region and consequently have serious repercussions on NATO. At various occasions Schmidt had voiced his concern about the establishment of a Soviet-dependent communist regime in Portugal. In order to strengthen democracy in Southern Europe, one had to be prepared to make financial sacrifices.[619] The concern about a possible destabilisation of the Mediterranean had without doubt, an impact on German perceptions about the PCI and its search for governmental allies. In a confidential conversation between Schmidt and the leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party, Mario Soares, on 1 July 1976, Schmidt briefly mentioned the

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[615] Note on a meeting between Schmidt, Genscher, Ford and Kissinger on 27 July 1975, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 333.
[616] Position paper of the German government on the development of the West European communist parties, 30 April 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 346.
[617] Conversation between Schmidt and Callaghan on 30 June 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 350. See also conversation between Genscher and Callaghan, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 333.
[618] The SPD provided financial aid to the Spanish and Portuguese Socialists. In fact, the Portuguese Socialist Party was founded in exile at Bad Münstereifel in Germany in 1973. See Marshall, *Willy Brandt*, p. 107.
[619] Helmut Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn. Menschen und Mächte II* (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1990), p. 398.

summit meeting in Puerto Rico a few days earlier. The German chancellor asserted that Great Britain, France, the United States as well as Germany, jointly agreed that financial support would not be granted to governments that included communist parties. This was first of all directed against Italy, so Schmidt held, yet, it would also be applied to Portugal, which had equally been recipient of financial credits.[620]

As correctly pointed out by Rubbi, the fact that the PCI had expressed itself critically vis-à-vis the Portuguese Communist leader Cunhal, and pursued a course entirely different from that of the Portuguese leader did not receive much attention in the West, let alone alter the SPD-FDP analysis of the PCI. [621] An agreement to disagree was probably the most Berlinguer had in common with Cunhal. Furthermore, the PCI sought to establish ties with the Portuguese Socialists, with whom the PCI shared reciprocal positions[622] and a number of meetings took place between Berlinguer and Soares.[623]

The question of coalition governments with communist parties in Western Europe had also been subject of debate at conferences of the Socialist International held in Helsingør on 18 January 1976 and in Paris on 24 January 1976. At these conferences, Mitterrand propagated a coalition between Socialists and Communists in France, an idea that was heavily objected by Helmut Schmidt. The German chancellor declared that due to both domestic and foreign policy reasons, Mitterrand's proposals had to be rejected.[624] In a private conversation with James Callaghan on 8 May 1976, Kissinger said that 'the US government was taking a hard line on the participation by the Communists in the Italian government because their

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[620] Conversation between Schmidt and Mario Soares on 1 July 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 351.
[621] Rubbi, *Il Mondo di Berlinguer*, p. 71.
[622] See also Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer*, p. 235.
[623] *L'Italia nella politica internazionale*, 1979-1980, (Istituto Affari Internazionali: Edizioni di Comunità, 1981), p. 574.
[624] Helmut Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn. Menschen und Mächte II*, p. 242.

judgement was that if the Communists joined government in Italy before the French elections were held, this could have some influence on those elections and could increase the chances of Mitterrand coming to power'.[625]

Thus the crisis within the DC and the growing success of the PCI had already been subject of debate during numerous bilateral meetings. During a meeting between Schmidt, Ford, Genscher and Kissinger on 27 July 1975, a key role in preventing a PCI entry into government was attributed to the Italian Socialists.[626] This had already been affirmed during preceding talks between Schmidt and James Callaghan on 24 July 1975. The British Prime Minister held that a key role was played by De Martino and that relations with the PSI consequently had to be intensified.[627] The SPD simultaneously deepened relations with the Italian Socialists.[628] From the perspective of inter-party relations, the SPD had always considered the PCI - as the strongest party of the Italian Left - as a point of reference in Italy's political spectrum.[629] As we will examine later, this took the form of exchanges between party delegations and their respective youth organisations. These were preceded by direct SPD-PCI contacts from 1967 onwards in light of Ostpolitik. In the 1970s, Brandt was responsible for coordinating SPD relations with other parties of the Socialist International.[630] Germany, Britain and the United States had made efforts to strengthen ties with the Socialist De Martino, as the decision of the PSI was fundamental in the coalition building process. [631]

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[625] Extract from a private meeting between James Callaghan and Henry Kissinger on 5 August 1976, in The National Archives, PREM 16/978.
[626] The German ambassador in Rome, Meyer-Lindenberg, had voiced in a meeting with his colleagues from France, the United Kingdom and the United States in April 1976 that the only chance (to diminish a PCI success) lay in a return of the 'centro sinistra', in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 346.
[627] Conversation between Schmidt and Callaghan on 24 July 1975 in Hamburg, in ibid., Bestand B 150, Band 333.
[628] Conversation on the situation in Italy amongst a delegation of the German foreign ministry on 6 May 1976, in ibid., Bestand B 150, Band 347.
[629] Interview with Karsten Voigt, 16 June 2008.
[630] On Brandt's role as the president of the SI, see Marshall, *Willy Brandt*, p. 106ff.
[631] Conversation between Schmidt, Genscher, Ford and Kissinger, 27 July 1975, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 333.

Western concern assumed new dimensions when the PSI had stated after the 1976 elections, that it was no longer prepared to participate in a government that excluded the PCI.

3.) US Foreign policy and the Italian Communist Party 1975/1976

To a student of the Italian Communist Party, it is more than surprising that the Italian political situation in general and the advance of the PCI caused such an enormous amount of attention and concern in the US-administration in 1975/76. One would have assumed that Italy did not rank high in the US' strategic (military) thinking. Both German and British archival sources, however, confirm that the eventuality of a PCI entry in government was discussed at various occasions between the US and Western European leaders in the course of 1976. Some quite plausibly suggested that the US government began to actively engage in the Italian political crisis only after the regional elections of 1975, as a result of the PCI's rising success.[632] Generally speaking, it can be established that the US-administration led by Jimmy Carter (from the beginning of 1977 onwards) was slightly less (outspokenly) concerned by a communist advance to government in Italy, than its predecessors, the Nixon-Kissinger and Ford-Kissinger administrations.[633] Despite existing concerns, the Carter administration adopted what one may term a 'more moderate anti-communist line'. This had certainly been the case during the 1976 Carter presidential election campaign, though hostility intensified slightly once in office. In practise, this entailed a greater 'wait and see' attitude and an avoidance of direct interference in Italian domestic affairs. The former Ford-Kissinger

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[632] Bino Olivi, *Carter e L'Italia. La politica estera americana, l'Europa e i comunisti italiani* (Milano: Longanesi & C., 1978), p. 111.

[633] See also *L'Italia nella politica internazionale*, 1976-77, (Istituto Affari Internazionali: Edizioni di Comunità, 1978), pp. 16-17. See also Hans Günter Brauch, 'Eurokommunismus und europäische Sicherheit aus der Sicht der USA: Schlussfolgerungen für demokratische Sozialisten', in Gerhard Kiersch and Reimund Seidelmann (eds), *Sicherheit und Entspannung in Europa. Die Antwort des demokratischen Sozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, Köln: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1977), p. 105.

administration was less reluctant to lay the 'democratic ground rules' for the domestic scene in Italy.

During a meeting with Ford and Kissinger in Helsinki on 1 August 1975, Moro and Italy's Foreign Minister Rumor tried to explain the PCI's distinctiveness, stressing the party's attempt to become part of the regular political process in Italy and to adjust their policies accordingly, like in the case of the PCI's support of NATO.[634] Ford and Kissinger, however, urged to fight the communist expansion in Italy, and to prevent a PCI entry in the area of government at all costs.[635] In a conversation between Kissinger and the German Defence Minister Georg Leber on 1 July 1976, Kissinger emphasised the view that 'the possibility of accepting a PCI participation in government, like many American intellectuals or US media had voiced it, would equal political suicide.'[636] According to the US secretary of state, the question of the extent to which the PCI was independent from Moscow was completely irrelevant in this respect.[637] This was because US public opinion and decision-makers would never understand the idea of an 'independent' communist party. Interestingly though, Kissinger also stressed that the US-administration at the beginning of the 1960s was partly responsible for failing to strengthen a democratic alternative in Italy by promoting the *apertura a sinistra* ('opening to the left').[638]

The historian Gualtieri suggests that the Carter-administration had accepted and trusted the DC's strategy of containing the growing electoral strength of the Italian Communists by co-opting it in a subordinate role in order to stabilise the economy.[639] German archival sources

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[634] Gualtieri, 'The Italian political system', pp. 438-439. See also Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer*, p. 241.
[635] Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer*, p. 241.
[636] Conversation between Kissinger and Georg Leber, 1 July 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 351.
[637] Ibid.
[638] Ibid.
[639] Gualtieri, 'The Italian political system', pp. 440-441.

also confirm that Carter seemed more reluctant to isolate Italy in the event of a communist entry in government.[640] Rather, so Carter held, it is important to employ possibilities that would allow Italy to remain a solid member of the Atlantic Alliance even under a communist inclusion in government.[641] Until the formation of a DC-minority government in Italy in August of 1976, Carter adopted a comparatively moderate position on the PCI and the eventuality of its entry into Italian government, despite an undoubtedly existing preference for the opposite scenario. Carter thereby distinguished himself from his political opponent Ford.

4.) The Puerto Rico meeting of June 1976: a Western coordinated strategy against a PCI entry in government?

The Puerto Rico summit of June 1976 is generally referred to in the existing literature as an overt expression of Western interference in Italian domestic affairs.[642] The participants of the meeting, the heads of states of the United States, Britain, France and Germany (at the exclusion of the Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti) allegedly established a common and coordinated strategy to exclude the PCI from the area of government. Italian parties across the political spectrum and Italian national press expressed in the aftermath of this 'disclosure' their greatest exasperation about Western outspoken interference in national affairs of a member state of the Western alliance.[643] In the following I will shed some new light on the events prior to Puerto Rico, the economic summit and its aftermath, based on German and British archival information, contesting the existing literature that the Puerto Rico summit

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[640] Mario Margiocco, *Stati Uniti e PCI 1943-1980* (Roma-Bari: Editori Laterza, 1981), p. 214.
[641] Notes on the current problems of the Atlantic Alliance, 1 June 1976, in AdSD, 2/BTFG001540. See also an essay by Dieter Dettke on Carters' foreign policy, 24 May 1976, in AdSD, 2/BTFG001540.
[642] Gualtieri, greatly overstating, even spoke about the 'Puerto Rico declaration', in Gualtieri, 'The Italian political system', p. 439.
[643] The issue was logically picked up by the Communist daily *L'Unità*. The newspaper declared that the incident marked a means of putting on enormous pressure to influence decisions of national matters. It was an attempt to condition the autonomous and sovereign choices of the Italian population. See *L'Unità*, 'Critiche all'acquiescenza dei governanti italiani dopo il ricatto rivelato dal cancelliere Schmidt', 20 July 1976, p. 1; *L'Unità*, 'Grave intervento di Ford sulla situazione italiana', 20 July 1976, p. 1.

marked a coordinated expression of Western hostility against the PCI. There was no coherent strategy or Western policy to speak of, neither prior nor after the Puerto Rico meeting. Equally important, as far as the SPD was concerned, an enormous discrepancy between official government declarations and internal party lines will be highlighted.

The fear of a communist expansion in Italy and its influence on the Mediterranean were indeed discussed in private talks during the economic summit meeting held on 27/28 June 1976 in Puerto Rico. British archival information confirms that an occasion was sought to privately discuss the recent developments in Italian politics. A steering brief by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office prior to the Puerto Rico summit stated on 23 June 1976 that the 'original and undisclosed purpose of the meeting was to provide cover for private discussion between the US, Britain, France and Germany of Italy in the aftermath of the Italian elections' and that 'it was clear that domestic political motives were high among Ford's reasons for calling the summit.'[644] 'Ford and Kissinger have been particularly concerned for some time about the consequences of the possible participation of the Communists in the Italian government.'[645]

On 16 July 1976, two weeks after the summit of Puerto Rico, the German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt had declared in an interview with American economic journalists that the 'United States, France, Britain and Germany would refuse to grant Italy financial assistance if the Communists participated in the Italian government'.[646] In response to a comment by a journalist that 'the US made it very plain that they would not help if the Communists came into Italian government', Schmidt had replied that 'not only the United States but also France

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[644] Economic Summit Meeting. Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 23 June 1976, in The National Archives, CAB 133/467.
[645] Ibid.
[646] Helmut Schmidt in an interview with American economic journalists, 16 July 1976, in AdSD, Depositum Helmut Schmidt, 1/HS AA 6351.

and Britain and we (Germany) will not participate if the Communists are included'.[647] No specific reference was made to Puerto Rico. Prior to the interview with US journalists, Schmidt had, however, insisted that what he said about other countries was off the records and that he did not wish to be quoted on his remarks.[648]

The Italian historian Barbagallo argued that although international hostility to a PCI advance to government was eventually publicly expressed only by Schmidt, he did so undoubtedly also in the name of Ford, Callaghan and Michel Debré.[649] With respect to the British Prime Minister, there is no substantial evidence to maintain this argument, at least as far as it is possible to tell on the basis of the archival records.[650] Whereas German and British archival sources do not reveal anything substantially new with respect to an analysis of the PCI prior to Puerto Rico (in as much as official government papers produced by the respective foreign and defence ministries alerted the serious repercussions for NATO and the Mediterranean if the PCI were to enter government, despite the party's democratic reassurances)[651], it is of great interest that British archival sources indicate that no official decision or common strategy on the PCI had been taken at Puerto Rico.[652] On the contrary, Schmidt's remarks on 16 July 1976 had largely taken British officials by surprise. In a report, Anthony Crosland, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, stated that 'we were surprised by reports that we had, together with our German, French, and US colleagues, reached agreement in Puerto Rico to withhold financial aid to Italy if the Communists were to enter the Italian government. We have not been party to any such agreement in Puerto Rico or anywhere else. We note that the French dissociated themselves from the comments attributed to Chancellor

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[647] Ibid.
[648] Ibid.; see also The National Archives, PREM 16/978.
[649] Michel Debré was President of the French Council. See Barbagallo, 'Enrico Berlinguer, il Compromesso Storico e l'Alternativa democratica', pp. 943-944 and Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer*, pp. 271-272.
[650] It is also worth mentioning that no reference was made by James Callaghan to Puerto Rico in his autobiography, at least not with regard to the discussions on Italy. This suggests a lack of relevance of the issue on British policy. See James Callaghan, *Time and Chance* (London: Collins, 1987).
[651] Declaration on the position of the federal government on Western European Communist parties, 30 April 1976, Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 346.
[652] The National Archives, FCO 33/2950.

Schmidt.' Moreover, Crosland's report stated that the British opted for a policy of absolute non-interference in Italian domestic politics.[653] British diplomats stated in response to Schmidt's interventions that they were 'from a point of view of effect, clumsy and ill-timed and that they were widely attributed to German electoral considerations'.[654]

This has also been confirmed in a telephone conversation between James Callaghan and the French President Giscard D'Estaing on 18 July 1976. With reference to the Puerto Rico summit, the French president stated that the meeting was confined to an exchange of views and that while undoubtedly all four (the US, Britain, France and Germany) agreed that a communist participation in Italian government was not desirable, it was preferred not to express this publicly at the moment. Giscard D'Estaing voiced his astonishment and incomprehensiveness about Schmidt's remarks and that they were not very appropriate at the time.[655] Callaghan seemed more hesitant in general, on taking a firm line towards the PCI and stated that he preferred to 'say that he would not be prepared to absolutely deny aid to any Communist government'.[656] The British Prime Minister voiced that 'he did not comprehend why Schmidt had made public that an exchange of views was held and that he had always been fearful that it would come to the public'.[657]

A number of reports prior to the meeting confirmed that Britain was somewhat hesitant in taking a firm position on any Italian government including the PCI. Papers by the Foreign Office argued that 'there was no need for the Alliance to take decisions in a hurry'[658] and that

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[653] Report by Crosland on Italy, in The National Archives, PREM 16/978. A statement by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary in Brussels on 19 July 1976 said that 'no decisions were taken on aid for Italy and that British policy is one of absolute non-interference in Italian domestic affairs', FCO 33/2950.

[654] They continued to argue that 'the episode will not have made easier Andreotti's task of securing PSI support for a new government and that it has given the PCI the opportunity to claim that he has shown himself incapable of defending Italian interests and national dignity', in ibid., FCO 33/2950.

[655] Records of a telephone conversation between the Prime Minister and President Giscard D'Estaing on 18 July 1976, in The National Archives, PREM 16/978.

[656] Ibid.

[657] Ibid.

[658] 'The Italian political situation', Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (on what line to take) for the economic summit meeting at Puerto Rico, 23 June 1976, in The National Archives, CAB 133/467.

'external pressure on the new government if too abruptly applied could have serious adverse political consequences in Italy'.[659] A briefing by the British Foreign Ministry from 23 June 1976 stated that the 'present thinking in London is that any action in the direction of putting Italy in quarantine or of showing deliberate coolness towards any Italian government whatever its complexion, would be a serious mistake'.[660]

Britain undoubtedly considered a communist entry into Italian government as undesirable as its Western allies since it would consequently lead to disturbances within the Atlantic Alliance, yet refrained from expressing this hostility too overtly. A British analysis of the PCI emphasised that the Leninist elements in the party were not to be underestimated, but that there could be no hope of having broad Italian or other European public opinion in sympathy with the Western powers if the PCI's claims to accept democratic pluralism were 'brushed aside as totally irrelevant'.[661] Other statements even suggested that the 'initial objective should be to test the genuineness of the Communists' intentions'.[662]

With regard to taking drastic measures or putting pressure on Italian politicians prior to government formation, the British also adopted a 'wait and see policy'. In a statement it was held that 'it may be argued (e.g. by the Americans) that the right course is now for the international financial community to put pressure on the new Italian government, as soon as it is formed, to take the necessary measures to put its economic house in order. But ... external pressures on the new government if too abruptly applied could have seriously adverse political consequences in Italy.'[663]

Britain thus opted for a policy of non-interference, at least with respect to statements prior to the Italian elections and the Puerto Rico summit. Britain's line did not alter substantially in

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[659] Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 24 June 1976, in The National Archives, CAB 133/467.
[660] Ibid.
[661] Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 23 June 1976, in ibid.
[662] Ibid.
[663] Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 24 June 1976, in ibid.

the aftermath of the meeting and Schmidt's declarations were not only not shared but disapproved of by the British government.

This indicates a discrepancy between Schmidt's declarations in the aftermath of Puerto Rico and British archival findings. Even the findings of the German state archives of the Foreign Ministry do not confirm Schmidt's declaration on behalf of the United States, Britain and France. To the best of my knowledge, no paper or minutes of the private meeting or its alleged decisions at Puerto Rico can be found in the German state archives. The only reference to the alleged decisions taken at Puerto Rico was during Schmidt's previously mentioned conversation with Mario Soares, leader of the PSP, on 1 July 1976.

Helmut Schmidt's remarks on the so-called agreement amongst the four powers also led to considerable dissent between the SPD and the French Socialists. In a meeting between officials of SPD and the French Socialists of the 'Parti socialiste' (PS) in July 1976, the French delegation stressed that the attempt to pressurise the Italian government was based on a political analysis with which they largely disagreed. More generally, PS and SPD diverged over their appraisal of Western European communist parties.[664] According to the French Socialists, the PCI was on its way to democracy, which in turn could have a positive impact by leading towards an opening up of the international communist movement. Any erroneous reaction by the West would bear the risk of pushing them back into Soviet arms.[665] In accounting for these remarks, one has to bear in mind of course the specific domestic political situation of the French Socialists and their relation with the French Communists.

Disregarding the PS' national motivations, the debate manifested the deep rift between the SPD and the French Socialists and their diametrically opposed evaluation of European

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[664] *Die Welt*, 26 July 1976.

[665] Conversation between a delegation of SPD and PS officials on 21 July 1976. Willy Brandt and Jürgen Wischnewski were part of the German delegation. In AdSD, Depositum Helmut Schmidt, 1/HS AA 6241.

communism.[666] Schmidt's statements were met with great incomprehension by the Vice Secretary-General of the French Socialists, Pierre Mauroy. According to him, they merely represented a German pivoting to US demands.[667]

Whereas on the basis of the archival records in Britain one can confirm that one or a number of private meetings were held in Puerto Rico, it cannot be concluded – after the consultation of both German and British archives – that a common strategy was adopted. It is quite plausible that the situation in Italy was informally discussed (given the overwhelming amount of material accumulated on the PCI and its evolution in general as well as previously mentioned discussions amongst heads of states) but British sources equally indicate that no mutual decision was taken and that Schmidt's remarks did not meet British or French agreement. The lack of sources on the matter in the German state archives support this argument. Thus, with respect to the four, one cannot speak of a thoroughly developed strategy to co-ordinately attempt to detain and ultimately damper the Italian Communists' growing support.

In the aftermath of Puerto Rico, a quadripartite diplomatic meeting on Italy took place on 9 July 1976 in Paris.[668] The purpose of the meeting was to establish a set of guidelines on which governments (of the four) might base individual approaches to Italian leaders with a view to persuading them to work towards a truly reformist Italian government (without the PCI). The intention was to convey to the Italian leaders that if a reformist government with a developed plan was formed, it would make it easier for (other) governments to provide the economic and

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[666] *Vorwärts*, 29 July 1976.
[667] *SZ*, 23 July 1976.
[668] The meeting was attended by Sonnenfeldt (US), Hibbert (Great Britain), Carnac (France) and van Well (Germany). See paper on the meeting, 9 July 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 351.

financial facilities required.[669] The German representative at the meeting, Günther van Well, a high-ranking German diplomat in the foreign ministry, pressed for the financial experts of the four powers to meet and establish a specific economic package to be added to the draft guidelines. The United States, Britain and France as represented by Sonnenfeldt, Hibbert and Carnac, however, opposed this on the grounds that a specific economic package could not be forwarded to individual Italian leaders until a government was formed to deal with.[670]

With respect to the foreign intervention in Italian domestic affairs as expressed by Schmidt, Barbagallo argued that it was Giulio Andreotti who maintained that Schmidt's declarations were requested by Ford, in order to counterbalance those statements made by the democratic candidate Carter, who in fact downplayed the problem of a communist participation in government.[671] This is possible but not plausible. It would overstate the importance of the Italian political situation in American domestic affairs and ongoing presidential election campaign. It is equally unlikely that the declaration was made as a result of DC pressures on Germany or the US to position themselves against the PCI. Any foreign interference would have reflected negatively on the DC by questioning its capacity to defend Italian national interests and to press ahead with the coalition building process. Foreign interference could even play into the hands of the PCI by raising anti-American or anti-German sentiments in Italy. This implies that Andreotti in fact had been rather upset by these interventions on the grounds that they ultimately only strengthened the PCI, suggesting that there had not been any alternative to the PCI's abstention. Andreotti later recalled that the Italian Socialists had been very critical about Schmidt's declaration and with reference to the level of governmental

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[669] With a balance of payments in deficit, the Italian government was forced to seek a series of international loans both from West Germany and from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

[670] See paper on proposals forwarded to Italian leaders in light of coalition building talks, 9 July 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 351. See also meeting on quadripartite action on Italy, in The National Archives, PREM 16/978.

[671] No sources are used by Barbagallo in support of this argument. See Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer*, p. 274. A similar line of reasoning can be found in *Corriere della Sera*, 20 July 1976, p. 1.

interference in the domestic affairs of another country, and he expressed his accordance with the Socialists.[672]

The whole 'Puerto Rico affair' was completely overstated in importance and dimension. Nonetheless it is interesting to examine the extent to which the PCI, and its possible entry into Italian government, were so widely and thoroughly discussed by Western European leaders. The Western European leaders', governments' and ministries' appraisal of the PCI was in no way homogeneous so that a 'common strategy' was in any case impossible to adopt. The enormous concern was pushed to the extreme by Schmidt and the Ford-administration. Hence, the so-called Western interference in Italian affairs as entailed in Schmidt's statements was most likely a joint US / German 'initiative', whose origins can only be sought in the domestic political situations. At the same time it was expressive of an ignorance and failure to understand the Italian political situation and the PCI. In an interview on 8 June 1976 Crosland acknowledged that he believed that 'people in Northern Europe have an extraordinary ignorance about the Italian Communist Party. It is a party that has its own tradition, its own aspiration, its own theory in Italy which owes a great deal more to Gramsci than it does to Marx.' He concluded that 'it was very hard, given the degree of ignorance of the party, to make up his mind as to how far the revisionist trend was a genuine factor and how far it was not.'[673]

Nonetheless, there existed a mutual agreement between the United States and Germany (at least with respect to Schmidt and Genscher) that concrete initiatives had to be taken in order to prevent a communist participation in Italian government. A number of meetings between Schmidt, Genscher, Ford and Kissinger held on 14/15 July 1976 indicate that a reciprocal understanding existed between the US and Germany that aid should not be granted to an

[672] Giulio Andreotti, *Diari 1976-1979. Gli anni della solidarietà* (Cles: Mondatori, 1981), p. 23.
[673] The National Archives, FCO 33/2949.

Italian government that included the PCI. Moreover, financial assistance was to be tied to certain sets of reforms.[674] Schmidt's public statement on 16 July 1976 was therefore most likely made in agreement and prior consultation with the US-administration, yet there is no evidence to suggest that the declarations were also made on behalf of Britain and France. Moreover, these statements merely reflected Schmidt's personal line, were not discussed within the SPD and would not have found official party approval.[675]

To a student of the PCI, this immense Western concern and exorbitant hysteria about the consequences of a PCI participation in government seems fairly exaggerated. The West largely overreacted to the threat that Western communists' participation in government actually posed. As suggested above, it also seems somewhat surprising that the fear of a communist advance in Italy took a high priority in the US-administration, especially in light of the forthcoming elections in the autumn of 1976, as had been maintained by a number of scholars.[676] Again, foreign policy and even less the domestic political affairs of other countries, never assume a high strategic importance during national election campaigns, unless perhaps parallels can be drawn between the domestic circumstances of the two.

It could even be held that it was in fact in the interest of US leaders not to voice an intransigent line about a PCI advance to government publicly, as this could have been counterproductive: an American involvement in Italian domestic affairs might have raised anti-American sentiments in Italy. Consequently, this would only further strengthen the PCI rather than weaken it, or push the party closer to the Soviet Union. A similar rationale had been advanced in a paper by the British Foreign Ministry, arguing that the strains of office, if the PCI were to achieve it, would be likely to increase the tension between the hardliners and the reformist wing in the party, and it would be important, if possible, to encourage the

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[674] Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 352.
[675] Interview with Voigt, 16 June 2008.
[676] See, for example, Olivi, *Carter e l'Italia*, pp. 111-112; Varsori, *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali dal 1943 al 1992*, p. 193; Barbagallo, *Enrico Berlinguer*, pp. 271-272 and p. 274.

latter.[677] 'We must be careful to avoid any action which can be represented as designed to make more difficult the task of an Italian government which included the Communists, such action would only enable the Communists to blame the Allies for unwarranted interference.'[678]

A German governmental analysis had in fact come to a similar conclusion, suggesting that isolating Italy (in the event of a PCI entry into government) would only push those forces within the PCI closer to Moscow, forces which had previously been interested in greater autonomy. This would only counteract their assimilation.[679]

As much as the Ford-Kissinger administration wished to prevent a communist participation in Italian government and thus took an intransigent line on the PCI, Schmidt equally went to great lengths not to be considered soft on communism. There were national electoral reasons for this. Most plausibly, Schmidt's outspoken anti-communist stance must be analysed in light of the upcoming elections in Germany in autumn 1976, and allegedly positive remarks about the PCI made by Schmidt in the spring of 1976.

In March 1976, Schmidt was reported to have been too lenient about a PCI participation in government. In response to a question by foreign press, Schmidt seemed to have said that he did not wish to get involved in domestic affairs of other countries. In a different context, Schmidt had highlighted that in Western Europe's post-war history, communist parties had twice joint government in a member state of NATO. Schmidt supposedly declared that 'the Western military alliance was flexible enough to also include governments with communist

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[677] Brief by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 23 June 1976, in The National Archives, CAB 133/467.
[678] Ibid.
[679] 'Analyse der Auswirkungen möglicher italienischer Wahlergebnisse für Bundeskanzler, hier: NATO', 11 June 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 349.

participation', so that in fact the PCI could have been very pleased with the German chancellor.[680]

This was presumably said by Schmidt in response to previous critical statements by US President Ford and NATO Commander-In-Chief Haig.[681] Schmidt's remarks were reported to have led to serious rifts over the issue between Schmidt and US-President Ford. Schmidt's press speaker was later busy repudiating press reports about the chancellor's comments and suspected US-German divisions.[682]

Being 'soft on communism' or seeking contacts with Western European communist parties could be greatly misinterpreted and used by the opposition in the German election campaign, as had been done during the 1972 election campaign of the CDU.[683] In the SPD-related press, it was regularly held that the Conservatives had previously used every opportunity to insinuate and accuse Brandt of popular front intentions (a term generally used when discussing left-wing coalitions including the communists).[684] In a conversation between Genscher and Callaghan, the German foreign minister drew a parallel between the coalition building process in Italy and the forthcoming German elections, suggesting that 'if the Italian Socialists refused to co-operate with the Christian Democrats and formed a government with the PCI, he [Genscher] would not be prepared to take any bets on the elections in the FRG. One of the main slogans of the CDU/CSU was that socialism was akin to communism. If a popular front government was formed in Italy, the CDU could take major gains.'[685]

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[680] This, at least, was the impression of the journalist of the following article, entitled 'The Italian Communists could be pleased about Schmidt'; see *FAZ*, 'Italiens Kommunisten mit Schmidt zufrieden', 4 March 1976.
[681] Ibid.
[682] *SZ*, 'Schmidt dementiert positive Äußerungen über KPI', 6 March 1976.
[683] Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 345.
[684] *Vorwärts*, 'Mit Kommunisten regieren?', 20 May 1976.
[685] Meeting between the Prime Minister and Genscher at the House of Commons, 25 May 1976, in The National Archives, PREM 16/978.

Given the particular geopolitical situation of the FRG, all parties naturally and unequivocally distanced themselves from the communist regime in the GDR. The SPD was, however, as a result of its Ostpolitik, more vulnerable to attacks by the CDU/CSU and subject of ongoing criticism for being 'too soft and for pursuing a compromising line vis-à-vis the East'. The SPD's allegedly moderate line and willingness to negotiate with the East had been publicly used to damage the SPD during the election campaigns in 1972 and 1976.[686] As discussed before, the CDU/CSU criticised what they had seen as unnecessary concessions in the negotiation process over the Eastern treaties and therefore largely refused to vote in favour of the treaties in parliament.[687]

In 1976, the CDU/CSU conducted a calculated *Angst* ('fear') election campaign, designed to play on the insecurities in the new political and economic environment. The SPD was portrayed as a party dangerously close to communism and as a counterpart the CDU/CSU, represented themselves as close to the values of the social market economy and liberal freedoms.[688] The SPD's central themes in the campaign were 'Model Germany' – the success of détente policy and relations with East Germany and Eastern Europe, a sustained high level of economic performance despite world recession, social stability and security attained through the consolidation of social security and welfare provisions.[689] Even if the elections were ultimately successful and the social-liberal coalition renewed, the SPD saw itself continuously confronted with opposition attacks about its relations with communism and the East.[690] Schmidt's hostility towards a PCI entry into government was therefore largely

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[686] In an interview, Schmidt stressed that the discussion about the so-called 'popular front virus' was a propaganda tool used by the CDU/CSU in every national election campaign. Interview with *Panorama*, 2 February 1976, re-printed in Timmermann, *Wohin marschiert die Linke in Europa?*, p. 94.
[687] See also Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name*, p. 32.
[688] Padgett and Burkett, *Political Parties and Elections in West Germany*, p. 227.
[689] Ibid.
[690] It is worth noting that the SPD's partner in government, the FDP, did at various occasions voice its hostility vis-a-vis the PCI. Genscher had called upon all German forces to do everything possible to prevent a communist entry in government in Italy (and France). See *Münchener Merkur*, 'Italienische Mahnung an Genscher', 23 March 1976.

influenced by the German election campaign and attacks about formerly published, more positive statements. Schmidt himself justified his positions time and again by stressing that he was in fact very interested in the Eurocommunist movement and political figures such as Berlinguer and the Spanish leader Carillo, he could, however, not afford to do so for fear of misinterpretations in Germany and abroad. He consequently refrained from personal contact.[691]

Italian national press for their part took on the 'Puerto Rico incident' and rejected, quite comprehensively, Western interference in affairs of national concern. On 21 July 1976, the communist daily *L'Unità* spoke of a 'Giscard-Schmidt plot', against which the PCF was organising protest rallies.[692] Press reports in Italy largely concord over the origins of Schmidt's revelations in them being widely attributed to German national electoral reasons; Schmidt feared that a DC-PCI agreement in Italy would favour the Kohl-Strauss opposition prior to the elections in autumn 1976.[693] While British participation in the affair was generally seen as minimal, contradictory statements were made as far as French involvement in the matter was concerned.[694]

As far as the SPD was concerned, it is absolutely essential though to distinguish between statements made on an official government level and internal party positions. There existed an enormous discrepancy between Schmidt's declarations and those of other German Social Democrats. They reflected upon Schmidt's personal views (and some individuals within the

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[691] See Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn. Menschen und Mächte II*, p. 420.
[692] *L'Unità*, 21 July 1976.
[693] Schmidt went to great length to make his mark as an anti-communist on a national and international level especially vis-à-vis his national opponents who attacked SPD policies towards the East and the results of Ostpolitik, in *Corriere della Sera*, 'La strategia dura di Schmidt', 21 July 1976.
[694] *Corriere della Sera*, 'Washington conferma l'accordo anti-PCI', 18 July 1976. This article suggests that Schmidt's and Giscard's positions were more explicit and rigid (exceeding even those of Ford and Kissinger), while Callaghan had been more subtle. The same article, however, also argues that while Schmidt's declarations were approved in the United States and France, Britain tried, for national and international reasons, not to get too overtly involved in the matter.

SPD) and were not shared by other leading SPD figures. Willy Brandt, SPD leader at the time, for example, thought it useful if the former 'centro sinistra' and the PCI discussed possibilities of agreements over crucial questions outside the area of government[695] and was in fact open to a PCI participation in government.[696] Karsten Voigt highlighted that the SPD had long considered the PCI as the undisputed partner in Italy; after all, both parties represented the strongest and uncontested parties of the Left in their countries alike. Contacts and exchanges between the SPD's and PCI's respective youth organisations, the Young Socialists 'Jusos' and the Federazione Giovanile Comunisti Italiani (FGCI) had long existed.[697] Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul for example, leader of the German 'Jusos' at the time, heavily criticised Schmidt's declarations on the PCI.[698]

During many occasions Horst Ehmke approved of the recent positive development of the PCI. 'If Western European communist parties succeed in freeing themselves from Soviet hegemony, this can only positively influence our judgement about the parties'.[699] This, so Ehmke, applied in particular to the Italian Communist Party, in which positions had come to the fore which had previously only been adopted by Western European socialist parties. The changes within Eurocommunist parties is of great importance to the development of communism and it would be wrong, so Ehmke said, to dismiss these as mere tactical manoeuvres as many Conservatives have done in Germany.[700] Ehmke even saw analogies between the position of the PCI and that of social democratic parties. 'The PCI, which "carried" a very unpopular economic policy saw itself, as a result of it, confronted with attacks from leftist extremists. The party is in a typical social democratic situation.'[701] Finally, and this is crucial, after a thorough analysis and observation (of the Eurocommunist parties)

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[695] Conversation between Willy Brandt and Meyer-Lindenberg (ambassador) at the occasion of Brandt's visit to Rome on 14/15 April 1976, in Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 346.
[696] Interview with Voigt, 16 June 2008.
[697] Ibid.
[698] *FAZ*, 22 July 1976.
[699] *FAZ*, 'Ehmke begrüßt Offenheit der italienischen Kommunisten', 6 March 1976.
[700] Horst Ehmke, 'Sozialdemokratie und Eurokommunismus', in Götz Hohenstein (ed.), *Der Umweg zur Macht* (München: Wirtschaftsverlag Langen-Müller/Herbig, 1979), p. 226.
[701] Ibid.

Ehmke refused to accept the dogma of the impossibility of communism to transform itself, as a failure to do so would be a grave political mistake.[702]

Paradoxically, these 'extremist positions' on the PCI occurred at a time when the party had opened up considerably to and reiterated its acceptance of the values of Western European democracies, 'the plurality of political parties in an atmosphere of free competition, autonomy of the trade unions, religious freedom, freedom of speech, culture, art and science'.[703]
The PCI had long accepted and supported the Common Market and came to endorse NATO in the context of its dynamic understanding of détente. A withdrawal from NATO would destabilise the prevailing superpower equilibrium, and endanger the strategy of détente. The securing of détente had been possible, so said the PCI, due to the attainment of a military strategic equilibrium and further progress can be made only if unilateral disadvantages for one or the other side were not produced.[704] PCI foreign policy was outspokenly equidistant and declarations about positions that were 'neither anti-American nor anti-Soviet' were reiterated whenever possible. The PCI came to embrace a kind of pacifist, critical Atlanticism, similar to the German Jusos. Bracke went even further arguing that it was necessary for the Italian Communists to continue emphasising the benefits of détente to domestic and international strategy, as after 1969 this became the main, even the only, justification for its continued belonging to the Soviet-dominated communist world.[705]

Paradoxically, the Puerto Rico meeting coincided with the conference of European communist parties held in East Berlin on 29-30 June 1976. The fact that the PCI participated at this conference at all was owed to the fact that there existed no final, obligatory resolution or binding document for all communist parties of the conference to sign. The contents of the

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[702] Ibid., p. 228.
[703] Segre, 'The "Communist Question" in Italy', p. 703.
[704] Ibid., p. 699.
[705] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 369.

document had been heavily debated prior to the conference and the PCI ultimately attended, retaining that it would not be party to any such resolution or document. In his speech, Berlinguer clearly and unequivocally stressed the right of every communist party to follow an autonomous and national path to socialism and firmly rejected any foreign intervention in national affairs. This was, without doubt, directed against the Soviet Union. Moreover, Berlinguer did not fail to emphasise that the conference represented a meeting amongst free, equal and independent communist parties and not a closed reunion of the international communist movement. Finally, he underlined that the PCI did not agree with the content of the final document.[706] According to PCI officials, this rejection underlined the unbinding character of the conference. The importance of this meeting with respect to the PCI's growingly independent and autonomous international policy should not be underestimated. It was the most outspoken public manifestation of how narrow the shared ideological ground between the PCI and Moscow and its world communist organisation had become. The benefits of belonging to this movement were increasingly explained in terms of European and global strategy. [707]

Berlinguer also addressed the issue of a confrontation with social democracy. While he rejected social democracy as adequate in overcoming capitalism in the West, he acknowledged certain achievements in improving the conditions of the working class. At the same time, he firmly dismissed the model of Eastern European socialist societies as appropriate in corresponding to the particular conditions of the working and popular masses in the West.[708] The PCI by then shared more common ground with Western European socialist parties and links with the Soviet Union had become somewhat of a painful necessity. The PCI's concept of an Italian socialism had always been diametrically diverse from Soviet

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[706] *L'Unità*, 'I Lavori della Conferenza dei Partiti comunisti e operai d'Europa. L'intervento del compagno Berlinguer', 1 July 1976, re-printed in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, MOI, 140.
[707] Bracke, *Which Socialism*, p. 369.
[708] 'Discorso di Berlinguer alla Conferenza dei Partiti comunisti e operai d'Europa', East Berlin, 29-30 June 1976, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, MOI 140.

communism; the idea of diverse modes to socialism had been inherent in Togliatti's polycentrism of the international communist movement. By the mid-1970s, the difference was that the PCI had come to realise the insurmountable disagreement with Moscow in doctrinal terms; what had to be re-thought were the relations with the Soviet-led movement in strategic terms. Interestingly and ironically with regard to the almost simultaneously held Puerto Rico summit, West German diplomats had positively acknowledged the importance of the June 1976 East Berlin conference. By far, the highlight of the conference was acknowledged to have been Berlinguer's speech. According to German diplomats, the speech had assumed 'an historical dimension' in the history of the communist movement and Berlinguer had clearly used the occasion 'to underline the basis of a socialist world-view'.[709] The report about the conference concluded that Berlinguer convincingly laid out his party's independent position vis-à-vis Moscow and the international communist movement.[710]

In 1979, the PCI 'returned to opposition', in the sense that the years of 'national solidarity' and communist collaboration with the DC outside the area of government had come to a close. Despite all dangers of PCI advances to power as conjured up in the West, and exaggerated concern of the Italian situation, the PCI's failure to enter government and subsequent return to opposition was not primarily due to international reasons. To assign this exclusively to external hostility would be too simplistic and overestimate the weight of international influence on Italian domestic affairs. Moreover, it would fail to acknowledge the impact of the domestic context. The PCI failed first and foremost because of its own rank-and-file, and DC supporters who were more deeply antagonistic towards governmental cooperation between the two forces than their respective leaderships. International hostility

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[709] Report on the conference of European communist and workers parties in East Berlin, report from 2 July 1976, Permanent mission of West Germany in the GDR, Politisches Archiv des AA, Bestand B 150, Band 351.
[710] Ibid.

against the PCI might have diminished, if the PCI in fact had the chance to 'mature' through governmental responsibility.

Chapter 6

Part II

The NATO dual-track, the end of détente and the return to 'opposition'

1.) SPD, PCI and the question of Cruise missiles

Towards the end of the 1970s, détente was increasingly imperilled and came to an end with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. In strategic-military terms, the return to and building up of the growing Cold War tension was most forcefully expressed by the debate over the installation of new US Cruise missiles and Pershing 2 on Western European territories in response to and as a shield towards the Soviet SS-20s, which had been produced since 1974 and had replaced some of its older versions.

In the second half of 1979, the debate over the deployment of what had widely become known as 'euromissiles' therefore largely determined the international political climate. At first sight, the debate over the Cruise missiles highlighted a noticeable divergence between the SPD and the PCI, at least as far as official party resolutions on the issue were concerned. Both parties held in common a similar notion of détente, and its importance for the overcoming of East-West divisions. The climate of international détente, which had characterised the post-1968 period until 1975/76 (with the CSCE), had allowed a maximum amount of freedom for both parties to have pursued their distinct policies and contribute to the stabilisation of the international climate. The SPD did so through its unique and internationally accepted social-democratic foreign policy as entailed in Ostpolitik. On the other side, we witnessed a communist party that enjoyed maximum electoral support, pursuing a distinct foreign policy which not only distinguished the party from other communist parties but may lead attentive students to address the question of what was still communist about that party when in fact so little distinguished it from the Western European non-communist left. In the late 1970s

however, the debate over the euromissiles seemed to renew the gap between the PCI and its national and international opponents.

A closer analysis of the debates which took place within the SPD and the PCI, as well as an examination of the motivations for certain positions, alters this first impression. Even if officially supporting the NATO resolution to install new missiles in case negotiations with Moscow failed (this is essentially what the NATO dual-track entailed), the SPD was painfully divided over the issue. This also reflects upon the enormous constraints the SPD faced in complying to the Atlantic Alliance, vis-à-vis its coalition partner, the FDP, and last, but not least, its own chancellor.

The PCI's position was also branded by paradoxes and ambiguities, determined by external and internal constraints. At its first Party Congress in 1979 to discuss the matter, the majority of the SPD voted, after an enormous internal debate, reluctantly in favour of the dual-track decision. Simultaneously though, the SPD's resolution put great emphasis on the negotiation aspect of it. On an official party level, the SPD's support of NATO's decision of course underlined the differences with the PCI (which had voted against it). This, however, provides us only with half of the picture. The matter was much more complex than that. A closer analysis of the internal party debates, origins and motivations for specific positions reveals a much more accurate picture of the multiplicity of factors that were intertwined in the euromissile debate. It also suggests that the two parties' positions produced more similarities and shared more common ground than one would have initially assumed.

Before going any further another point needs to be addressed here. The PCI and SPD delegates' so often painful debate over the NATO dual-track decision provides an illustrative case of the study between the considerable correlations of international decisions and domestic policies and complexities. Both SPD and PCI were heavily constrained by internal and international obligations. While external constraints should not be undermined, I will

emphasise the primacy of domestic politics and the national context in accounting for the SPD's and PCI's positions over the NATO decision. The central hypothesis, therefore, is that the parties' position on the euromissile debate was a reflection of domestic policy interests. The PCI's strategic link with the Soviet Union as to further the cause of détente should also not be underestimated in the context of the missile debate.

Had the two parties managed to liberate themselves from the constraints they faced, the outcome of decisions on the matter may have been rather different. The dual-track was approved of at the December 1979 SPD Party Congress despite its unpopularity. Many SPD delegates were divided over the notion of military parity through rearmament in order to then disarm. The many pacifists in the SPD could not quite comprehend what seemed to them to be the obvious paradox of achieving and maintaining détente only via a military strategic equilibrium (and through rearmament if necessary to restore the disparity) as entailed in Helmut Schmidt's military strategic thinking. To many of them, the notion of rearmament stood in direct contradiction with the concept of détente. Yet, they adopted a position of what one can term ambivalent benevolence at the 1979 Party Congress, perhaps in respect of their own chancellor, who had very early on linked his own political fate to his party's decision. One will also notice a discrepancy between the thinking behind the PCI's alternative proposal to the dual-track and that of the remaining activists at the party's base. An overview of the developments in Italy also demonstrates that the Cruise missile debate provided quite an interesting example of the use made of international questions for domestic purposes. Foreign policy decisions can almost never be analysed exclusively, but must be placed in the context of national interests as they are often a reflection of domestic strategies and calculations.

2.) European interests in the SALT negotiations

To fully comprehend the debate that evolved around the production and subsequent deployment of Cruise missiles and Pershing 2, as formulated in the NATO dual-track decision, it is helpful to engage in a brief excursion of the ongoing SALT II negotiation process and the European security interests involved in it. The United States and the Soviet Union had previously excluded the so-called European strategic weapons, both those of the two superpowers and of the nuclear forces Great Britain and France from negotiations and on 26 May 1972, SALT I was signed. With this treaty, the superpowers agreed to freeze the number of launchers for intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) and for sea-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) for a period of five years until October 1977. Negotiations for a follow-up agreement of SALT II were initiated almost immediately after the signing of SALT I (at the end of the year). It is important to note here, that the members of both the Warsaw Pact and NATO were not directly involved in the negotiation talks, but the negotiations' outcome affected their own military security interests.[711] The social-liberal government in Germany unequivocally supported the signing of both SALT I and II, however, disapproved of the failure to achieve military strategic parity on all levels, especially with respect to so-called euro-strategic weapons. Of course the demand for a rapid signing and ratification of SALT (I and II) was not solely raised by the SPD and the PCI, but widely agreed upon and a general understanding existed amongst all political parties in Germany and Italy over the issue.[712]

In this context, the peculiar geopolitically-related security dilemma of the Federal Republic should be re-addressed. The geopolitical and strategic position of the Federal Republic, which would make it the first and utmost victim in an East-West confrontation, shows the FRG's

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[711] Thomas Paes, *Die Carter-Administration und die Regierung Schmidt. Konsens und Dissens über die Sowjetunion-Politik 1977-1981* (Berlin: Schäuble Verlag Rheinfelden, 1991), p. 80.
[712] The PCI also called the ratification of SALT as one of its principal objectives. See PCI (ed.), *Progetto di tesi per il XV Congresso nazionale del PCI* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1978), p. 42.

vulnerability with regard to the Soviet Union. The federal German foreign and security policy capacities were still limited and characterised by a clear dependency on the USA.[713]

3.) The theoretical foundations of the Cruise missile debate in Germany

The theoretical background was developed by Helmut Schmidt in the autumn of 1977. On 28 October 1977, Schmidt used the occasion of a speech to the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London to publicly address the issue of an impending imbalance between the Soviet and US intermediate-range nuclear forces. This, according to him, was a result of the stabilisation of the US-Soviet strategic powers through SALT, which had left the issue of intermediate-range missiles untouched. There is no doubt that Schmidt argued from the viewpoint of a necessary parity in tactical nuclear weapons.[714] Since the mid 1960s, Schmidt had always linked his détente policy to a rather mechanistic conception of military balance.[715] This was one of the key differences that distinguished Schmidt from his predecessor Brandt. Whereas according to the latter, rearmament was detrimental to any successful European peace policy, Schmidt argued from a classic military, security-related perspective. The concept of political and military parity was, according to him, indispensable to and the precondition for any fruitful reduction of tension.[716] Moreover, it was the sine qua non for the maintenance of security altogether.[717] If not, military imbalance on the one side would automatically result in political blackmail by the superior side. It is interesting to note that the very concept of Schmidt's security rationale and the 'logic' of disparity equal

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[713] Herbert Dittgen, *Deutsch-amerikanische Sicherheitsbeziehungen in der Ära Helmut Schmidt. Vorgeschichte und Folgen des NATO-Doppelbeschlusses* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1991), p. 21.
[714] See also Susanne Peters, *The Germans and the INF Missiles* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1990), p. 147.
[715] Helmut Schmidt, *Strategie des Gleichgewichts* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1981), pp. 16-19. See also Wilfried Loth, *Overcoming the Cold* War, p. 159.
[716] H. Schmidt, 'Politische und wirtschaftliche Aspekte der westlichen Sicherheit'. Speech by Helmut Schmidt to the IISS on 28 October 1977 in London, re-printed in Helga Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Stabilität. Außenbeziehungen der Bundesrepublik zwischen Ölkrise und NATO-Doppelbeschluss* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1986), p. 197. See also Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung*, p. 56. See also Barbara D. Heep, *Helmut Schmidt und Amerika. Eine schwierige Partnerschaft* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1990), p. 26.
[717] H. Schmidt, 'Politische und wirtschaftliche Aspekte der westlichen Sicherheit', p. 197.

repression were challenged by Karsten Voigt. He contested the idea that one-sided rearmament measures automatically led to a loss of security by the other side. Armament imbalances in specific areas did not inevitably signify that the – for military security necessary equilibrium of mutual deterrence – would lapse.[718] On the contrary, they could, if the general defence mobility was not compromised, positively support and accompany the negotiations process.[719]

Brandt's foreign policy concept was marked by the priority of negotiation and disarmament. Schmidt, on the other hand, saw the overriding task in the strengthening of transatlantic (and European) cooperation, especially in the military-security related field.[720] These two diverging quests marked the twin components of social democratic security thinking in the mid-1970s. The debate over the Cruise missiles forcefully demonstrated that these two concepts became increasingly incompatible. Schmidt, however, continued to emphasise that détente could only be achieved and maintained on the basis of military parity.[721] Thus, he reiterated during various occasions that it was of key strategic importance to establish and maintain a military balance between the two superpowers, and most importantly, a strategic parity which were to include medium-range weapons directed at Europe.[722]

A general agreement existed that Schmidt's fears were not completely unfounded. By the mid-1970s, there was a growing concern within the NATO alliance that détente, whatever its other merits, was not a substitute for continuing NATO military programmes and that the Soviet Union was steadily building its military power – conventional, tactical nuclear, and so-

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[718] Voigt, *Wege zur Abrüstung*, p. 57.
[719] Voigt, Press documentation of the German parliament, INT-102-6/4.
[720] See also Thomas Enders, *Die SPD und die äußere Sicherheit. Zum Wandel der sicherheitspolitischen Konzeption der Partei in der Zeit der Regierungsverantwortung (1966-1982)* (Melle: Ernst Knoth, 1987), p. 132.
[721] Helmut Schmidt, 'Wir sichern den Frieden', in *Vorwärts*, 15 March 1979, p. 9.
[722] In an article in February 1979, Herbert Wehner stressed that both SPD and FDP agreed to the fact that military parity did not need to be expressed in total arithmetical equivalence of all forces and weapons, but political and security parity needed to be assured overall. See H. Wehner 'Deutsche Politik auf dem Prüfstand', as quoted in AdSD, SPD-Bundestagsfraktion, 8. Wahlperiode, 2/BTFH000079.

called 'long-range theatre nuclear forces' (LRTNF) – in Europe.[723] The new medium range SS-20 missiles, which were gradually replacing the older SS-4s and SS-5s beginning in 1977, could give the Soviets a first strike capability against NATO's European allies.[724]

An interesting question with no definite answer is whether Schmidt (and naturally all those who were concord with his military thinking) was concerned with a real fear of a Soviet threat (due to the undeniable existence of the SS-20s) or was more interested in the never ending longing for an American commitment to the security of Western Europe. Here I opt for the latter.

Schmidt himself admitted that at no time did he seriously believe in a Soviet strike against Western European cities. Military superiority (by one bloc) was, according to Schmidt, equivalent to the political suppression (of the other). True parity in military terms was hence the essential precondition for successful negotiations. This did not reflect upon SPD thinking in general. Many in the SPD did not arrive at the same conclusions as a result of the present military status quo. Karsten Voigt, for example, had also stressed that whilst 'the Soviets disposed superiority in intermediate range missiles, this would not logically imply an uncalculated threat and that because Moscow was rather risk-averse. The existing Western nuclear potentials provided a sufficient deterrence'.[725]

The intentions of Schmidt's speech held at the IISS in October 1977 were subject to various interpretations. The crucial question to address was whether Schmidt intended to establish a Euro-strategic balance exclusively through arms control or whether he called for the deployment of LRNTF as a shield against the SS-20s. Did he have a rearmament option in

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[723] Garthoff, *Détente*, p. 935.
[724] Loth, *Overcoming*, p. 150.
[725] Interview with Voigt, 16 June 2008.

mind, or did he hope to publicly press the US to include the weapons of debate in the ongoing SALT process? In spite of all strong declarations in favour of military equilibrium etc., it is most likely that Schmidt was, at that stage, most interested in armament reduction and not an arms race. The occasion was chosen carefully to press the US to take Western concerns seriously. Schmidt himself declared in his speech that in order to establish parity between the two superpowers, there were two options: rearmament and reduction. He would opt for the latter.[726] The argument that Schmidt in theory favoured disarmament over remilitarisation was further strengthened by the fact that Schmidt had previously urged US leaders to include the SS-20s in the ongoing SALT II negotiations. Schmidt recalled that during a private conversation between him and Ford, he had raised the subject of the emerging 'Grey Area' in Europe. The term 'Grey Area' had been invented to describe all of the US and Soviet nuclear delivery systems not included in the SALT II negotiations. The US president had reassured the German chancellor explicitly that he would attempt to include the SS-20s and the backfire-bombers in the ongoing SALT II process.[727] No written record of this conversation, however, exists; typical of Schmidt's style of leadership at the time to discuss such matters during private meetings. This perhaps also demonstrates that Schmidt trusted Ford and believed he would seriously attempt to address the issue of Soviet superiority in the area of intermediate range missiles. Whether Ford in fact would have threatened the already difficult SALT II negotiations prior to the US elections in November 1976, or whether he had hoped to postpone the question of the inclusion of the SS-20s until after the elections, is difficult to ascertain and subject to controversy.[728] Contrary to Carter, Ford was more willing to understand Schmidt's fear of the emerging 'Grey Area', whereas Schmidt's concern of the impending imbalance was simply dismissed by the succeeding US president and his national

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[726] Helmut Schmidt, 'Politische und wirtschaftliche Aspekte der westlichen Sicherheit', pp. 198-199.
[727] Helmut Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte*, p. 210. Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 366. See also Paes, *Die Carter-Administration*, p. 90.
[728] Heep argued that Ford believed a signing of SALT II before the US elections to be unrealistic. He preferred to address the subject of the SS-20s only after the elections. Heep, *Helmut Schmidt und Amerika*, p. 44.

security advisor Brzezinski. Schmidt was particularly concerned to avoid giving Moscow any impression of a possible decoupling of the US-West German security partnership and any US disengagement from Western Europe and the FRG. Any doubts about US willingness to defend its Western European allies would presumably, following Schmidt's rationale, give the Soviets a psychological advantage over the West Europeans, which could then be exploited. Schmidt had come to realise that his concerns were largely ignored in Washington and he therefore attempted to publicly put the Americans under pressure.[729] This was the context within which Schmidt addressed the issue in his speech in London in October 1977.

After the US elections in November 1976 and the victory of President Carter, American-German relations deteriorated. The US was neither prepared to complicate the already stagnant SALT II process any further by insisting on the incorporation of medium-range missiles as Schmidt had demanded, nor did the US regard it as necessary to station new medium-range missiles on European soil. During 1977 and 1978, Schmidt continuously sought to discuss the emerging military disparity in Europe with Carter and his national security advisor Brzezinski.[730] The Carter-Administration did not share Schmidt's concern over the increasing Soviet nuclear capacity and the deployment of the SS-20s.[731] The US-administration under Carter held that the United States were superior in the area of strategic weapons in general, so that rearmament in the intermediate missile range was not necessary to achieve parity.[732] Schmidt, on the other hand, insisted that the SS-20s represented a growing instrument of political threat and coercion.[733] He firmly believed that negotiations with the Soviet Union were only possible on the basis of a military parity and not through Soviet

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[729] Interview with Bahr, 1 June 2007.
[730] Helmut Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte*, p. 228.
[731] Dittgen *Deutsch-amerikanische Sicherheitsbeziehungen*, p. 183.
[732] Interview with Bahr, 1 June 2007.
[733] Helmut Schmidt, *Weggefährten*, p. 266.

growing superiority.[734] Carter and Brzezinski simply did not share Schmidt's concerns.[735] The position of the Carter administration, that large-scale attacks on Western Europe by Soviet medium-range forces could be deterred or countered by US strategic central deterrence alone (especially sea-based forces that were committed to NATO), did not convince Schmidt.[736] He was irritated by the fact that Carter did not take his concerns seriously.[737] His speech at the IISS in 1977 was therefore most likely intended to pressurise the new US-administration to change its intransigent position by publicly raising the issue.

4.) Germany, the US and the debate over the neutron bomb

The neutron bomb debacle had without doubt, a negative impact on German-American relations in general and on the Schmidt-Carter relation in particular. Its influence on the development over the NATO dual-track decision, at least as far as Schmidt's own decision-making process was concerned, but also its impact on shaping transatlantic relations in general, should not be underestimated. The debate over the production and eventual deployment of a neutron bomb on European soil had been triggered by Egon Bahr in an article for the SPD's weekly *Vorwärts*. Bahr called the issue a 'symbol of the perversion of human thought'.[738] The broad public opposition that made it a political issue in several countries of Western Europe, above all West Germany, was based largely on emotional grounds. The controversy over the neutron weapon also became an issue in American politics.[739] In the course of the debate, opposition in Europe grew. In West Germany, Schmidt faced a particular problem within his own party. The opposition against the neutron bomb

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[734] H. Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn. Menschen und Mächte II*, p. 251.
[735] See also Sodaro who argues that Brzezinski, Carter's national security adviser, greatly disfavoured new land-based missiles, in Sodaro, *Moscow*, p. 270.
[736] Christian Hacke, 'After NATO's Dual Track Decision of 1979: Where Do We Go From Here?', *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (1986), p. 84.
[737] Brandt, *Erinnerungen*, p. 364.
[738] As quoted by Helga Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Stabilität*, p. 104.
[739] Garthoff, *Détente*, p. 937.

within the SPD intensified in November 1977, when the SPD Party Congress in Hamburg had voted against the deployment of the neutron bomb in Western Germany. Schmidt himself was in favour of the bomb, and had attempted to prevent his own party from openly opposing the deployment.[740] After internal disputes within the German government, between the FDP-led Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the SPD-led Ministry of Defence, the German Federal Security Council finally decided in favour of deployment of the neutron bomb on Western German soil, subject to various conditions. The United States had insisted on public European acceptance of the deployment of the neutron bomb prior to any production decision.

On 7 April 1978 Carter, however, announced a postponement of his ultimate decision on the neutron bomb production. In a statement, Carter declared that he decided, 'to defer production of weapons with enhanced radiation effects', with 'the ultimate decision' to be made later.[741] Schmidt felt betrayed since he had fought hard in his own party for approval of this decision and to establish the necessary preconditions for deployment on the domestic policy terrain.[742] German-American relations were damaged by Carter's mishandling of the neutron bomb affair, and Schmidt's personal disappointment about the weakness and inconsistency of the American president.[743] The affair over the neutron bomb was not only important in light of SPD relations with the USA, but even more important as far as its domestic implications were concerned. In contrast to the majority of the SPD, the liberal coalition partner, strongly pushed by Genscher, had supported the production of the neutron bomb.[744] In this context, an inclination to weigh security and military priorities differently became already noticeable in the SPD-FDP coalition, but could be temporarily overcome by the postponement of Carter's decision. It is also important to note that the CDU-CSU had unanimously supported the

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[740] Peters, *The Germans and the INF Missiles*, p. 167.
[741] Garthoff, *Détente*, p. 938.
[742] Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Entspannung*, p. 238.
[743] Interview with Bahr, 1 June 2007; on the subject see also Heep, *Helmut Schmidt und Amerika*, pp. 106-107.
[744] Andreas Kramer, *Die FDP und die äußere Sicherheit. Zum Wandel der sicherheitspolitischen Konzeption der Partei von 1966 bis 1992* (Bonn: Holos Verlag, 1995), p. 172.

production of the neutron bomb, which could be interpreted as a renewed overture to the FDP.[745] This showed that a common perception of foreign and security policy-related issues was developing between the FDP and the CDU/CSU. In retrospect, this quite plausibly induced Schmidt to force his own party to support his line over the missile debate.

5.) The Guadeloupe summit meeting of 1979 and the formulation of the NATO dual-track decision

At the invitation of US President Carter, a summit meeting took place at Guadeloupe at the beginning of 1979. This meeting is generally held to have been crucial in the evolution of the dual-track decision of the Atlantic Alliance. Even though the concept of the NATO dual-track decision was more closely defined and elaborated upon at this summit meeting between President Carter, Chancellor Schmidt, President Valery D'Estaing and the British Prime Minister James Callaghan in January 1979, an analysis of the memoirs of Carter, Callaghan and Schmidt leaves some doubt as to whether the dual-track decision was officially decided upon at Guadeloupe and what the individual positions were.[746] The sequence and content of the Western European leaders' answer to Carter's proposal to deploy new US missiles in Western Europe, as expressed at Guadeloupe on 5/6 January 1979, were also subject to controversy.

During 1978, after the debacle of the neutron bomb, a re-thinking had taken place within the US-administration regarding the nuclear disparity in Europe. Continuing pressures from the Schmidt government and other European allies, backed by supporters in the United States, convinced the Carter administration that a new land-based deterrent located in Western

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[745] Ibid.
[746] Callaghan recalled that the Guadeloupe meeting could not reach a decision. In James Callaghan, *Time and Chance*, p. 544.

Europe was critical to reaffirming the durability of the American nuclear umbrella, especially since a loss of credibility began to characterise US defence policies after the decision to withdraw from neutron bomb production.[747]

At Guadeloupe, Carter had raised the issue of allied self-defence and pointed out that the West must meet the Soviet threat on intermediate-range missiles. As Carter later recalled, Schmidt had been very contentious, insisting that he would permit the deployment of additional missiles on German soil only when other European nations made arrangements for similar agreements.[748] Carter, however, insisted that it was Schmidt who had initiated the entire discussion of an impending imbalance on European nuclear theatre forces, and that the Germans must be willing to deploy these missiles in order for negotiations with the Soviets to be successful.[749] The meeting was expressive of the existing antipathy between Schmidt and Carter. As a result of the neutron bomb controversy, Schmidt no longer trusted Carter, considering him unreliable and unpredictable.[750]

It was the French President Valery Giscard D'Estaing, in cooperation with James Callaghan, who stressed the need to negotiate with the Soviets. Callaghan had also emphasised the view that the West should engage in negotiations prior to any decision for further deployment.[751] D'Estaing developed the theoretical basis for the dual-track, arguing that the Western position in these negotiations would be further strengthened by the decision to deploy new missiles in case negotiations failed.[752] Interestingly, it had not been Schmidt who pressed for a parallel effort to negotiate arms limitations. The negotiation aspect had only gained importance in the succeeding months, when it became clear that without an emphasis on simultaneous

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[747] See Sodaro, *Moscow*, p. 271.
[748] Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith. Memoirs of a President* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1995), p. 241.
[749] Ibid.
[750] Helmut Schmidt, *Weggefährten*, p. 264 and pp. 300-301.
[751] Stephan Layritz, *Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss. Westliche Sicherheitspolitik im Spannungsfeld von Innen-, Bündnis- und Außenpolitik* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992), pp. 68-69.
[752] H. Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte*, 1987, pp. 231-232. See also James Callaghan, *Time and Chance*, p. 550. It is also worth mentioning that both Carter and Callaghan recalled that the meeting ended with the issue unresolved, whereas Schmidt argued that the dual-track was formulated by Valery Giscard D'Estaing at Guadeloupe. See also H. Schmidt, *Weggefährten*, pp. 267-268.

negotiations, large parts of the SPD would not support the decision at all.[753] The meeting ended with no finalised decision taken. Nonetheless, one could not deny a prevailing general agreement at Guadeloupe that the West must meet the Soviet threat, in spite of the absence of a precise accord.[754]

Guadeloupe had enormous repercussions for Schmidt and his position within the SPD. Schmidt had agreed at Guadeloupe on the deployment of new missiles – after all, as pointed out by Carter, it was Schmidt who had raised the issue in the first place – but without any prior consultation within his own party. This so-called 'blank cheque', in the words of Egon Bahr, as signed by Schmidt at Guadeloupe, was later agreed upon in a small circle of SPD officials, but *only* if it was conditionally linked to the demand for simultaneous negotiations.[755] To many in the SPD, the negotiations aspect always had clear priority over rearmament. Many Social Democrats simply accepted the deployment side as a necessary 'evil' in order to arrive at negotiations with Moscow. After Guadeloupe, Schmidt was increasingly torn between his commitment vis-à-vis the alliance and forcing through the decision within his own party - a party in which many had strong ideological or moral objections to the idea of rearmament ever since the 1950s. The repercussions the issue had on the PCI were also considerable. As we shall see, the party was once more forced to make a 'choice of side', whilst not losing sight of its domestic ambitions.

After having principally agreed to the deployment of new Cruise missiles and Pershing 2 in West Germany, Schmidt's prior concern was directed towards avoiding Germany being the sole country where US missiles would be stationed. He was thus in search for allies across Western Europe. In order to avoid Germany's isolation, Schmidt insisted that intermediate

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[753] It should not go unmentioned that Bahr recalled later that Schmidt had, 'signed a type of blank cheque at Guadeloupe for the stationing of new missiles'; it was only in the aftermath that this had met, 'strong resistance in the SPD. The party demanded the inclusion of the negotiations aspect and only if these failed would the party support deployment of new missiles'. Interview with Egon Bahr, 1 June 2007.
[754] See also Haftedorn, *Sicherheit und Stabilität*, p. 117.
[755] Interview with Bahr, 1.6.2007.

range missiles should also be deployed in Italy, the Benelux countries as well as Great Britain.[756] The reason for this was to allocate the burden, i.e. to spread the potential repression of the Soviet Union resulting from the deployment decision and more importantly, it was the only means to secure the support of his own party at all. Additionally, it was a means to spread public disapproval over the stationing across Western Europe. In short, by insisting on the issue of Germany's non-singularity, Schmidt hoped to disarm those in West Germany, within the party and other social and political movements in society, who would oppose the deployment of new missiles.

On 12 December 1979 the decision was formally taken. The deployment of these nuclear systems would be distributed among five European countries: all 108 Pershing II and 96 ground-launched Cruise missiles would be deployed in the FRG, 160 Cruise missiles in the United Kingdom, 112 in Italy and 48 each in Belgium and the Netherlands.[757] At the same time, arms control negotiations on US and Soviet long-range theatre nuclear systems were offered to the Soviet Union in order to achieve a more stable overall nuclear balance at lower levels of nuclear weapons on both sides.

6.) The development of the NATO dual-track debate in Germany and Italy

The debate over new missiles on Italian and Western European soil occurred amidst a wider transformation of the Italian domestic political scenario. By 1979, the PCI's search for an entente with the centre and moderate left, had failed to succeed and had come to an abrupt end. The 1979 national elections seemed to confirm the end of the PCI's coalition experiment with the DC and the PSI; the party had suffered its first 'defeat' in terms of a decreasing share of votes in its post-war existence (a 4 percent loss compared to the 1976 elections). At the

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[756] H. Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn. Menschen und Mächte II*, pp. 311-312.
[757] Peters, *The Germans and the INF Missiles*, p. 2.

same time, the platform for a renewed understanding and cooperation between the DC and the PSI (at the expense of the PCI) seemed to be set.

Italy, as well as Britain, had agreed relatively quickly (subject to approval in parliament) to accept new deployments, thus reassuring Schmidt that West Germany would not be the only continental country to receive the new weapons. This public reassurance was important in that neither Belgium nor the Netherlands had finally decided to participate, given certain reservations and political uncertainty.[758] As a result of Italy's decision to participate in NATO's euromissile deployment, a new security debate took place in the country. The DC, the Republican Party, the Liberals, the Social Democrats and the Socialist Party signed a proposal declaring the government's official support of the dual-track decision as adopted at the NATO council meeting on 12 December 1979.[759] In Italy, the government's decision was, without doubt, also linked to a question of national prestige. This entailed the desire in playing a larger role in the moderation of NATO's nuclear forces and to increase the national importance over NATO affairs. This was likely to have been further accelerated after the absence of Italy's prime minister at Guadeloupe.[760]

The political weight of the Italian Socialists gained a new momentum in the missile controversy after the PCI had withdrawn its support from the DC-led government, thus bringing the years of national solidarity to an end. The Italian decision (as subject to ratification in parliament) was in the hands of the Socialists' choice in the matter. Without the PSI's support, the government coalition could not muster sufficient votes to secure the necessary parliamentary approval for the deployment.[761] The PSI was in a position to exploit

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[758] Garthoff, *Détente*, p. 542.
[759] *L'Italia nella Politica internazionale*, 1979-1980, Istituto Affari Internazionali (ed.) (Edizioni di Comunità: 1981), p. 543.
[760] Leopoldo Nuti, 'Italy and the Battle of the Euromissiles: The Deployment of the US BGM-109 G 'Gryphon', 1979-83', in Olav Njolstad (ed.), *The Last Decade of the Cold War* (London and New York: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 343.
[761] Ibid., p. 345.

the situation by drawing the maximum benefit from it. Craxi's party benefited from its support of the deployment by deliberately demonstrating to the US that his party could be a reliable partner in transatlantic relations, and with respect to the DC, a responsible coalition partner.[762] Moreover, Craxi had used the occasion to highlight PSI convergences with the SPD and the significance of his party's decision for the SPD and NATO.[763]

7.) The FDP and the debate of new missiles in Germany

Although the FDP did by no means support the NATO dual-track unanimously, the FDP's rank and file sustained its leadership's line more homogenously than its coalition partner. Despite its belief in the necessary continuation of Ostpolitik and détente, the FDP increasingly favoured the nuclear deterrent component as an appropriate response to the SS-20s.[764] One can notice a certain convergence between Schmidt's and Genscher's strategic military thinking. According to the Foreign Minister, the decision to rearm would not inevitably imperil the process of détente. In an article to *The Times*, Genscher declared that he was 'cautiously optimistic about the chances of negotiations with Russia after the expected NATO decision next week to arm itself (...), and that 'there could be no security without balanced armaments'.[765] Over the course of the debate until the installation of new missiles, Genscher managed to control the opponents in his party, and overall secured a relatively undisputed support. Anxious as both Schmidt and Genscher were to avoid any disturbance of relations with their Eastern neighbours, they were nevertheless convinced that a precondition of this relationship was the maintenance of the military equilibrium.[766] Despite numerous critical voices in the FDP, it can be principally sustained that the dual-track decision brought the FDP

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[762] Ibid., p. 353.
[763] *L'Italia nella Politica internazionale*, 1979-1980, p. 544.
[764] Kramer, *Die FDP*, p. 175.
[765] *The Times*, 'German hopes for détente after arms reduction', 3 December 1979.
[766] See also Peter Pulzer, *German Politics 1945-1995* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 135.

closer in line with the foreign policy and security-related concept of the CDU/CSU.[767] The position of the CDU/CSU in this debate should not go unmentioned. Both factions unanimously supported the decision to rearm. Franz-Josef Strauß (the CSU candidate for chancellor), considered the NATO decision as essential given Soviet superiority in the field.[768] Pressing the SPD to unequivocally position itself behind the modernisation of medium-range missiles, Strauß even argued for a stationing solely on German territories in case Belgium, the Netherlands (and the other countries under consideration) decided to withdraw from the decision.[769] The apparent FDP-CDU/CSU convergence over the issue induced Schmidt 'to discipline' his own party over the issue.

7.1) Germany, the SPD and the Cruise missile debate

Since the debate on military rearmament in West Germany in the early to mid-1950s, no military-related decision had been discussed so vehemently or caused such controversy in the SPD's rank and file and society than the issue of deploying new missiles on German territory. The key question to address, however, is why Helmut Schmidt (together with some prominent SPD figures) so vehemently supported a decision which was widely unpopular and caused such profound inner-party conflicts. This question can be dealt with, departing from the basis of two (mutually compatible) assumptions: firstly, Schmidt's dogmatic conviction in the correctness of the notion of military-parity and in the policy of deterrence and secondly the desire to remain in power.

Before going any further, the impact of German public opinion over the dual-track should not go unmentioned. Some of the existing literature stressed the growing unpopularity of the dual-track as expressive in public opinion polls. In this particular case, public opinion polls are to

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[767] Kramer, *Die FDP*, p. 180. For a detailed analysis of the FDP's position on the dual-track and the opponents in its own rank and file see ibid., pp. 188-189.
[768] *Münchener Merkur*, 'Strauß fordert klares Ja zur NATO-Rüstung', 3 December 1979.
[769] *General-Anzeiger*, 'Union und FDP fordern klare Entscheidung der SPD', 3 December 1979.

be used cautiously and are not necessarily helpful; rather they produce contradictory results on the matter depending on how the question was phrased. In a poll conducted in May 1981 asking whether, 'the dual-track by and large was supported or not', 53 percent of the respondents answered in favour of it (compared with 21 percent against). This result did not alter substantially between 1981 and 1982 (54 percent in favour). However, in another poll in 1981 that confronted the respondents with the question of, 'whether the planned Cruise missiles in response to the Soviet SS-20s on European territories should be prevented', 47 percent agreed the decision should be banned, 28 percent voiced their approval of it.[770]

Whether this influenced Schmidt's decision-making process is plausible, but unlikely. It may, however, have had an impact on the debate amongst the SPD's base. Schmidt himself was steered by his rigid belief in the policy of deterrence (even if at the lowest possible level), by his binding agreement towards NATO and the US as well as a strong commitment to the survival of the SPD-FDP coalition government and hence to his own political fate.[771] By connecting the decision over the dual-track with a possible resignation, he used a strong instrument to discipline and pressurise inner-party adversaries.[772] After all, what held the party together was a common desire to remain in government. On 9 October 1979, Schmidt had declared in a conversation with the Italian Prime Minister Cossiga that he was even willing to put at risk the existence of his government in order to push through the dual-track.[773] To link the decision over the missiles so vehemently with the continuation of the

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[770] *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 1978-1983*, Vol. 8, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, Edgar Piel, K.G. Sauer (eds) (München: Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach, 1983), p. 636.
[771] Helmut Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn. Menschen und Mächte II* , p. 251.
[772] In his memoirs Jimmy Carter said that Schmidt seemed to be torn between the conflicting political forces in his country. In private conversations between the two, so Carter recalled, Schmidt was very tough in dealing with the Soviet threat and that he was often *the* leader among Europeans in proposing string action. However, in German political debates, he emphasised the opposite fact of the same question and seemed reluctant to do anything which might be interpreted as anti-Soviet. Both Giscard and Schmidt were heavily under pressure from leftist political groups to minimise their criticism of the Soviets. See Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 547.
[773] Schmidt, *Die Deutschen und ihre Nachbarn. Menschen und Mächte II* , p. 312.

coalition government was used by Schmidt as a tool not to lose control over his own party on the matter.

After the Guadeloupe summit, Schmidt had first addressed the problem of a growing Soviet military superiority in the SPD's parliamentary faction meeting in February 1979. As far as the so-called 'Grey Area' was concerned, he reiterated that a combination of simultaneous modernisation and armament control negotiations had become vital.[774] The ultimate decision. however, was to be taken at a Party Congress held in December 1979 in Berlin. The 'Berlin Resolution' called upon the United States to continue arms production in the specific area and German acceptance of those on its territory if negotiations with Moscow failed to achieve the desired results.[775] The declaration had therefore linked the decision to rearm with a simultaneous demand for negotiation with Moscow. There should be no automatism. Leeway must exist to revise the decision in the event of a successful outcome of negotiations.[776]

The desire to remain in government was prevalent, and decisive for many prominent SPD members to accept the decision in spite of massive reservations. For instance, Willy Brandt's vote in favour was not motivated by conviction, but determined by the willingness to remain in power.[777] Brandt and others stressed that there could be no 'automatism' to the decision to deploy and that the issue would be discussed during two further party congresses.

Bahr later recalled that the decision over the dual-track was inextricably linked with the ratification of SALT II. 'Had we known that the SALT II ratification process was halted by the US senate, the dual-track would have never come to existence.'[778] This essentially meant that many in the SPD would have voted against it had they anticipated that SALT II had failed. Bahr ultimately voted in favour of the dual-track, albeit reluctantly. and with severe

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[774] Schmidt, SPD parliamentary faction meeting, 6 February 1979, in AdSD, SPD-Bundestagsfraktion, 8. Wahlperiode, 2/BTFH000081.

[775] SPD Party Congress in Berlin, 3-7 December 1979, re-printed in SPD (ed.), *Dokumente. SPD Außerordentlicher Parteitag. Beschlüsse zu Europa Friedens- und Sicherheitspolitik Organisationspolitik* (Bonn, 1983), p. 4.

[776] Ibid.

[777] Merseburger, *Willy Brandt*, p. 781. See also *Die Welt*, 'Die Raketen-Schlacht mobilisierte alles', 6 December 1979.

[778] Egon Bahr, *Was wird aus den Deutschen?* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1982), p. 149.

reservations. His choice was determined by the desire to prevent Schmidt from resigning and to press the Americans to enter negotiations as entailed in the second aspect of NATO's resolution.[779] The INF served as an instrument; to ensure that the American government came back to the arms control negotiating table with the Soviets.[780]

Karsten Voigt, on the other hand, had stressed during the debate at the 1979 Party Congress that a final decision could not be made at the present stage. A conclusive choice could only be made after a re-evaluation of the negotiation results of the two superpowers prior to any stationing.[781] Voigt also stressed that if SALT II failed to be ratified, in spite of a previous decision in favour of the NATO resolution, a new context would emerge and the issue would have to be voted upon again.[782] Despite this, the Berlin Congress was a failure for those in the party critical of the NATO resolution, and who wished to give the priority to armament control.[783] Voigt also touched upon the issue of the 'quality' of new missiles. In this context, he suggested that the Pershing II and the Cruise missiles not only meant rearmament in response to and directed at the Soviet SS-20s, but that NATO was planning a weapon arsenal on a qualitatively much higher technological level than the Soviet missiles.[784]

After the issue of Germany's non-singularity had been officially resolved and the negotiations part incorporated, the 1979 Party Congress voted in favour of NATO's decision. Both aspects had been preconditions for the majority to agree. The fundamental problem with the dual-track, of course, was that support for it needed to be secured over the period of four years until the deployment in 1983. Continued negotiations with the Soviet Union were therefore

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[779] Ibid., p. 150.
[780] Ibid.
[781] Karsten D. Voigt, 'Schrittweiser Ausstieg aus dem Rüstungswettlauf nach dem Berliner Parteitag der SPD', in *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, No. 1, 1980, pp. 47-51.
[782] Voigt, Press documentation of the German parliament, INT-102-6/4. See also Voigt, 'Schrittweiser Ausstieg', p. 47.
[783] Voigt, 'Schrittweiser Ausstieg', p. 47.
[784] Ibid. p. 50.

important to maintain and reassure the support of the SPD over a period of four years.[785] Without the commitment to negotiate, the already fragile majority within the SPD could have easily dissolved and shifted to opposition.

Schmidt therefore had every interest in East-West détente, as a collapse would have implied a return to Cold War hostilities and the freezing of arms negotiations. In late June 1979, Schmidt had already paid an unsuccessful brief visit to Moscow, and offered Kosygin a compromise whereby NATO would refrain from deploying new missiles, if the Soviets limited the number of warheads on the SS-20s to the level of the old SS-4s and SS-5s.[786] In 1980, Schmidt proposed a 3-year moratorium on the INF-deployment, his intention being to direct the Soviets to halt the emplacement of new SS-20s while NATO was waiting for Cruise missiles and Pershing II to become operational.[787] This triggered a wide rift in the already difficult relation between Carter and Schmidt.[788] Carter later recalled that Schmidt's proposal for some kind of 3-year moratorium had caused a serious problem between him and Schmidt, as Schmidt's proposal was widely interpreted as a reversal of Germany's position and an abandonment of the December 1979 NATO agreement.[789] Negotiations as envisaged in the dual-track officially began in November 1981 in Geneva. They lasted for the next two years without reaching a solution.

7.2) The PCI and the euromissile debate

The debate over the installation of new missiles caused a foreign policy dilemma for the PCI. Faced with the challenge of accepting new missiles (i.e. adopting a position similar to that of the SPD and of the other national players in Italy), the PCI was from the onset in a difficult situation with little prospect. By opposing NATO's decision, the party would risk complete

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[785] See also Layritz, *Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss*, p. 380.
[786] Loth, *Overcoming*, p. 155.
[787] Moscow rejected a moratorium on the stationing of new medium-range missiles as proposed by Schmidt. In ibid., p. 164.
[788] Helmut Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte*, pp. 256-257. See also Sodaro, *Moscow*, p. 274.
[789] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, pp. 544-545.

isolation, or vice versa by accepting it the PCI could have prompted its own division as the party's activists might not have carried the decision. Instead, the PCI did what it had done over the past decade. By referring to the primacy of détente it avoided aligning itself unequivocally with either side. In the euromissile debate, it adopted a position of neutrality, one that would not too outspokenly attack the United States or the Soviet Union, or reversely, one that criticised the arms race of both sides as detrimental to the cause of détente.

In line with previous statements in the 1970s, the party's careful balancing act of being 'neither against the US nor against the Soviet Union' continued. The PCI went to great lengths demonstrating that it took a responsible position directed towards preventing to impede previous achievements in the field of détente. In short, the PCI reiterated its equidistant character in the Cold War.[790] Whilst this was a reasonable position to adopt, especially as to the process of détente, this rendered the party vulnerable to attacks from both sides. At the same time this demonstrated that acceptance of NATO was one thing, but if this involved positioning itself clearly in the event of a military conflict, it was quite another. By referring to the primacy of détente at all costs, the PCI's position was certainly the most reasonable one (if viewed in the general debate over nuclear disarmament), but in the context of the given circumstances, also the most unrealistic: it showed once more that equidistance in the framework of deteriorating East-West relations was simply not an option and certainly not one to strive for if the other domestic political players had already placed themselves unambiguously.

The PCI attempted to carefully adjust the nature of its opposition to the security and defence interests of Italy and of the government – in particular those stemming from NATO decisions in order to retain its new image of a pro-Atlantic Alliance communist party. Against this

[790] Contrary to this, Piero Ostellino, for example, argued that in the debate over the Cruise missiles, the PCI's position was closer to that of the Soviet Union than Western Europe, in Ostellino, 'La politica estera del PCI', in Renato Mieli (ed.), *Il PCI allo specchio* (Milano: Rizzoli Editore, 1983), p. 472.

background, the PCI reiterated that the question could not simply be reduced to the call 'of staying in NATO or not'. NATO and Italy's belonging to it were not questioned. However, while leaving NATO was 'out of the question', staying in NATO could not simply amount to an unconditional acceptance of all of its decisions.[791] As far as the content of the NATO resolution was concerned, the PCI demanded instead the 'suspension or postponement for at least six months of any decision on the production or deployment of new US Cruise missiles or Pershing 2 and insisted simultaneously that the Soviet Union refrained from deploying SS-20s'.[792] The PCI insisted at once on immediate negotiations between the two superpowers to establish a military equilibrium in Europe at the lowest military level possible.[793] This emphasis on negotiations, rejecting any decision linked with the deployment of new missiles, was presented by Berlinguer in parliament on 5 December 1979, a few days before the NATO summit in Brussels finalised the dual-track decision.[794]

Prior to the PCI's decision, there was, following Pons, much greater debate on the euromissile issue within the party than had publicly appeared or may have been assumed.[795] The PCI's spokesman on the euromissile question was Romano Ledda, director of the PCI's centre of international political studies. Ledda's report acknowledged that the strategic balance might have shifted to the advantage of the Soviet Union. This acknowledgment could in fact have been taken as a first move to the Right – away from the Soviet Union.

The PCI had also closely observed the debate within the SPD. Ledda proposed that the PCI's position should highlight the demands for negotiation, thereby aligning the party to the

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[791] *L'Unità*, 'Per fermare la corsa al riarmo atomico', 6 December 1979, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 108.
[792] 'Discorsi, Dichiarazioni, Interviste 1979', in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 108.
[793] 'Discorsi 1980/1981', in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 109.
[794] *L'Unità*, 'Per fermare la corsa al riarmo atomico', 6 December 1979, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 108. See also Enrico Berlinguer, *Discorsi parlamentari (1968-1984)*, Maria Luisa Righi (ed.) (Roma: Camera dei Deputati, 2001), p. 189.
[795] Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 2006), p. 165.

SPD.[796] The condition would be the freezing of both NATO's decision to deploy as well as the construction of new Soviet missiles.

The PCI's executive was divided over Ledda's formulation.[797] Some members of the PCI's leading circle insisted on the dismissal of NATO's decision, but not in favour of negotiations. The most outspoken supporter of this position was Pecchioli, who held that the US position towards the euromissiles represented 'a clear anti-communist instrument' because it refused to accept the existing military equilibrium.[798] Both Bufalini and Napolitano gave way to the priority of the negotiation aspect, referring to the dramatic repercussions the installation of both Pershing 2, Cruise missiles and SS-20s would have. What was important here, is that Napolitano underlined the link between the missile question and the party's national policy. The PCI's access to government, so Napolitano said, was also dependent on a foreign policy consensus with the other democratic parties.[799] The debate demonstrates again the enormous internal and external constraints the PCI had faced and how they affected the party's position.

As discussed before, the Italian Communists' domestic strategy was heavily dependent on détente and international disarmament. Foreign policy divergences with the other parties would only further isolate the PCI. On the other hand, any decision that would have clearly aligned the party with one of the superpowers would have undermined the party's self-perceived image and intermediary role between the Cold War antagonists. At the same time, one could question whether the PCI's already prevailing national isolation would have substantially altered if the party had sanctioned the dual-track decision unequivocally. With hindsight, one can argue that PCI's impasse – in terms of an exhaustion of its political and social alliance options – had become an established fact, which a diverse position over the missile debate would not have changed.

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[796] Ibid., p. 166.
[797] Ibid.
[798] Ibid.
[799] Ibid.

Berlinguer ultimately spoke in favour of negotiations, arguing that the PCI could neither approve of the US missiles, nor was his party the foreign policy spokesman of the Soviet Union. In short, the PCI spoke against the NATO dual-track decision, but its opposition was not unyielding and dogmatic.[800] The PCI attempted to adopt a position which would be adjudged sensible and responsible, further highlighting the PCI's national responsibility. The PCI's effort to avoid an explicitly pro-Soviet stance in the debate was evident as this was essential not to provide party adversaries with further evidence or incentives for isolating the party, and dismissing it as anti-Atlanticist or a foreign policy arm of the Soviet Union.

Although the SPD had officially carried the installation of new missiles, we do notice a certain convergence between the SPD and the PCI. The idea behind the PCI's proposal was not that dissimilar from the reasoning of many leading figures in the SPD. The debate also produced considerable similarities with wider sections of the SPD and its youth organisation. Both the PCI and the majority of the SPD firmly believed in the necessity and significance of maintaining a military balance in Europe, but at the lowest possible level.

An examination of the debate within the PCI's leading circles sheds some interesting light on the reasoning behind the party's position. In his report to the PCI's executive, Berlinguer emphasised that he did not perceive the PCI as being altogether isolated. On the contrary, he stated that although the Italian Socialists adopted a pro-American position in principle, there also existed severe reservations within the PSI as to pursue a line that would too clearly distinguish the party from the PCI.[801] A closer assessment of the debate within the DC, so Berlinguer stressed, demonstrated that within this party too, there existed pressures from certain sectors within society and Catholic organisations. This in turn reflected upon the

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[800] See, for example, also Varsori who argued that the PCI, at least in the initial phase of the NATO decision, decided to adopt a low-profile attitude, in *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali*, p. 212.
[801] 'Berlinguer's report to the Direzione', 28 November 1979, in APC, MF 0439 7912.

position of the Vatican.[802] The Vatican was against any military escalation in principle, and therefore unsurprisingly pacifist in nature. Berlinguer criticised the Italian government for failing to develop an independent and autonomous position, and for tying its decision too closely to that of other governments, most notably to that of the Federal Republic of Germany.[803] This of course marked a contradiction as the PCI had also sought the SPD as a reference point in formulating its decision.

After examining the debate within other Western European countries such as the Netherlands and Belgium, Berlinguer concluded, also with reference to oscillating parts within the SPD, that the PCI was not isolated after all.[804]

Berlinguer's analysis seemed to present a fairly accurate picture of the debate that had evolved over the installation of new missiles and managed to grasp the generally pacifist mood amongst large parts of Western European society. In October 1979, large sections of the Italian Catholic organisations published a manifesto against the installation of new missiles. This further induced leading PCI officials to conclude that the appeal of these organisations against the deployment of Cruise missiles would offer a basis for unitary action.[805] This could also be interpreted as a renewed overture towards the DC or at least those sections more reluctant to rearmament. In the debate over the PCI's position, Di Giulio, a member of the party's executive, emphasised that the missile debate put the DC in clear difficulty. The DC was immensely concerned about the pressures and resistance coming from a broad Catholic spectrum. It was to those sections, Di Giulio concluded, that the PCI's position would be appealing.[806] Natta also stressed that the PCI was not isolated at all since its position would

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[802] Ibid.
[803] Ibid.
[804] Ibid.
[805] 'Lettera aperta di associazioni cattoliche', in *Avvenire*, 31 October 1979, re-printed in APC, MF 0439 0576.
[806] 'Discussion of the PCI's Direzione', 28 November 1979, in APC, MF 0439 7912.

meet agreement of the other European political forces and governments.[807] The most outspoken overture to the PSI was entailed in Napolitano's statement, who maintained that contacts with the PSI were useful and essential. Possibilities of mutual agreement and convergences could not be excluded altogether and certain pressures on the PSI could turn out fruitful.[808]

Berlinguer and some of the other members of the PCI's executive realistically evaluated and assessed the doubts this new military debate had caused within some sections of the PSI and the DC. Despite these uncertainties, the PSI and the DC, much as the SPD, officially carried the NATO decision. What Berlinguer had failed to realise and what eventually led to the party's isolation on a national scale, was the fact the PSI attempted to distinguish itself from the PCI over the missile debate. Even if there were some parts in the PSI who held views not dissimilar from those of the Communists, awareness of the influence on the government of the socialist stance, of the opportunity to hold a position similar to that of the SPD and the convenience of the debate in creating and establishing a distinction from that of the PCI in order to politically re-launch the party, induced the PSI and most importantly its leader, Bettino Craxi, to support the government's decision. This further demonstrates, as argued above, that the euromissile debate in Italy (as well as Germany) was exemplary for the domestic policy implications of certain foreign policy related issues and decisions. Both PCI and PSI were highly attentive to the domestic implications of their decision, while the former failed to grasp the prevailing desire within the PSI to disassociate itself from the Communists over the issue. The Italian Socialists sought the possibility to adopt a position similar to that of the SPD, which it thought useful in order to create a distinction from the PCI. It also seized the opportunity to re-identify the party's national and foreign policy image. After all, one has to bear in mind that political parties have to define themselves, when in power, against the coalition partners as well as the opposition. Once in power, they have to define themselves

[807] Ibid.
[808] Ibid.

again against its domestic rivals as well as against the other governing parties. The ratification of the NATO resolution in Italian parliament and the dependence on PSI votes attributed an enormous political weight to the party. This opportunity was seized by the Socialists to render themselves politically indispensable for the new government.

Ever since Bettino Craxi was elected leader of the PSI on 16 July 1976, he had stressed that the PSI had tied its destiny too closely to the Communists in recent years and reiterated that his party must follow a more independent line if it wished to restore its electoral fortunes.[809] Hence, the Socialist's support of the government's Atlantic policy and of the dual-track isolated the PCI and reduced its room for manoeuvre in the foreign policy context. Most importantly, the domestic and international importance of the euromissile question helped the Italian Socialists to build the image of an Italian left-wing party able to assume responsibility in the field of military and defence-related issues without being ideologically conditioned.[810]

The primary motivation for the DC to support a decision that was highly unpopular, not only amongst large parts of the population but that was also directed against a section of its own party supporters that should not be underestimated, was an attempt to gain a stronger role in the Atlantic Alliance. Italy had not been invited to Guadeloupe when the US, France, Britain and Germany had first discussed the SS-20s on a high summit level.[811]

The PCI's position, while in line with its general image of being a pacifist, albeit Atlanticist, national party, that wished to enhance its legitimacy by an intermediary role in the East-West conflict, contained a number of flaws: first of all, the PCI never managed to break away from its image to take truly independent decisions from Moscow. After all, the PCI was still a communist party and had no self-declared intention to tear itself away from its communist

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[809] The National Archives, PREM 16/978.
[810] See also Maurizio Cremasco, 'Italy: A new Role in the Mediterranean', in John Chipman (ed.), *NATO's Southern Allies: Internal and External Challenges* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), p. 207.
[811] Ibid., p. 206.

heritage (at least for the time being). No matter how often and how strongly the PCI reiterated its neutral position in the East-West conflict and its firm acceptance of Italy's international obligations, it remained after all a communist party and never managed to convince its political opponents that its decisions were not ideologically motivated or of tactic nature. As suggested before, the desire for international détente was accompanied by the fighting of a 'national Cold War' in Italy. The underlying problem of the PCI was that, in spite of all reassurances, it still called itself communist, though with the benefit of hindsight, only for another decade. Nonetheless, this would always discriminate and isolate the PCI nationally, accompanied by a reluctance of the other parties to enter a governmental entente with the party. This went hand in hand with the fact that the leading DC so far had no compelling reason to form a coalition with the PCI. To that end, the very question of whether the PCI's programme, its language, its political objectives, still had anything communist about them was indeed secondary.

Secondly, the PCI's foreign policy concept was very tightly linked to the process of détente and its self-imposed role as a mediator. The party failed to develop a dynamic and independent foreign policy in case détente and negotiations collapsed. Thirdly, and perhaps most politically fatal of all, was the PCI's failure to understand the changes occurring within the PSI. The Socialists' support of the government's Atlantic policy isolated the PCI by reducing its room for manoeuvre and simultaneously paved the way for the PSI to engage in new modes of collaboration with the DC. Although the PCI was fully aware that its political maturity as a possible and reliable party of government was also always evaluated on the basis of its compliance with NATO's military decisions, nevertheless, it underestimated the position of the PSI and the consequences of both parties' decisions on the Italian political system. Thus, although the PCI's position can be deemed responsible and characterised by its non-alignment in urging both superpowers to negotiate, the Italian Communists remained

relatively isolated on a national scale due to a failure to adopt a strategy in case superpower willingness to negotiate collapsed. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 only further reduced the PCI's room for manoeuvre. Moreover, given the transformed political landscape in Italy as a result of a reshuffling of coalition constellations, the PCI's position was irrelevant for the ratification process. This underlines my previous argument that in the event of the PCI carrying the NATO resolution, this would most likely not have substantially altered its domestic isolation.

Although the PCI's line and logic behind (the dual-track) converged with that of large parts of the Italian (and Western European) population, it did isolate the PCI nationally by further distancing it from the other Italian political forces.[812] The PCI's proposal to open negotiations immediately, dismissing every decision related to further deployment (on both sides), as represented by Berlinguer in parliament, however desirable, did not stand a realistic chance, although it managed to grasp the general pacifist atmosphere amongst the Italian population. This was, nevertheless, not sufficient. In the more general framework of Italy's military obligations, the PCI's proposal was not viable due to the country's obligation of alliance burden sharing. This was also the prevalent position of the other parties. Another weakness in the PCI's proposal lay in the fact that it anticipated a certain Soviet willingness to negotiate.[813] This was ever more openly questioned after the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan.

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[812] Sassoon, Introduction to Enrico Berlinguer, *Discorsi parlamentari (1968-1984)*, p. xlii.

[813] Berlinguer stressed that the PCI opposed the NATO decision to deploy new euromissiles also because according to the PCI, there was the possibility to enter negotiations with the Soviet bloc to avoid both the installation of new US missiles and SS-20s. See Berlinguer in *L'Unità*, 8 February 1980, as re-printed in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 109.

7.3) PCI and SPD convergences over the NATO dual-track

In retrospect, both SPD and PCI positions over the deployment of new missiles were determined by international obligations and domestic policy considerations. The PCI's line did not, and in many ways could not go beyond a 'neither SS-20s nor Cruise missiles or Pershing 2' without putting at stake its credibility as a promoter of international détente and a relaxation of military escalation. At the same time, as long as the PCI did not liberate itself from its ideological ballast (name, symbols etc. as the SPD had done in 1959), the party's policies were bound to be ideologically conditioned – at least as far as the PCI's national and international adversaries were concerned. The SPD accepted the dual-track reluctantly, not least in order to secure its own political position in government. Referring to an article by Egon Bahr in the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, the PCI affirmed the convergence between the two parties' positions. The SPD advocated ideas and positions which the PCI largely shared.[814] Bahr had criticised the uncontrollable rearmament and arms race, as well as the serious threats this implied. Instead, the proposed common objective should be the maintaining of a military equilibrium at the lowest possible level.[815] Disarmament and nuclear parity always had the priority over rearmament for many in the SPD. The logic of military and nuclear equilibrium as a method (to arrive at negotiations) seemed antiquated to many in the SPD. The level of the existing arms race was sufficient, and the stationing of new missiles in Western European would merely equate American superiority.[816] This of course, did not reflect upon the official party position on the government level. The question of whether the two parties converged, or held divergent conceptions over the missile debate depends on the perspective from which the subject is viewed. Despite the official agreement on the dual-track, the SPD was, on a non-governmental level, yet even more so viewed from the broad spectrum of party adherents as very critical and sceptic about the rearmament initiative.

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[814] APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 108.
[815] *Der Spiegel*, 15 October 1979, as quoted in *L'Unità*, 6 December 1979, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 108.
[816] Debate at the SPD Party Congress in Munich, 19-23 April 1982, re-printed in AdSD, Depositum Helmut Schmidt, 1/HSAA7814.

Inherent in this was the rejection of the idea that deployment of new missiles and the concept of nuclear deterrence would provide an additional security for Western Europe. The dual-track decision only forcefully triggered an existing and never ending security dilemma. West Europeans, and especially Germans, were on the one hand afraid that the United States would not use its nuclear arsenal (in defence of Europe), and on the other hand, precisely that they would. The PCI denounced the notion of deploying new missiles in case negotiations failed. In essence, this entailed the idea of ongoing negotiations until they were successful. In this. the PCI did indeed not follow the NATO line, which entailed a rearmament automatism, but nonetheless, profound features of the PCI's concept were compatible with ideas forwarded by leading figures in the SPD.[817] Pons suggested the opposite: that the SPD's vote in favour, though inextricably linked to the perspective of negotiation, underlined more the differences than the similarities with the PCI on an international level.[818] Here I would suggest that the tendency was the opposite. The rearmament debate illustrates the fact that more often than not, government parties, and less frequently opposition parties are not confronted with a certain set of foreign policy options. The choices are often already 'given' in that parties' policies often reflect upon internal (electoral and coalition) obligations and external responsibilities (international commitments etc).

Both parties became nationally isolated over the issue and were confronted with a lack of political alliances, the PCI from 1979, the SPD from 1982 onwards. The case of the missiles also demonstrated that every so often national political and international obligations or constraints undermine the existence of 'policy choices'.

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[817] See also Timmermann, 'Die Verwestlichung der KPI. Zu den internationalen Beziehungen der italienischen Kommunisten nach ihrem XVI. Parteitag', *Osteuropa-Archiv* (1983), p. 526.

[818] Pons, *Berlinguer*, p. 168. Rubbi, for example, later stated that in the euromissile question, the PCI and the SPD held almost the same position, only that Brandt, in his function as SPD president, found himself in the conflicting position to allow for official governmental policy; in Rubbi, *Il Mondo*, p. 140. The reverse may certainly be argued with regard to the PCI which, while adopting a principally pro-Western stance in the debate had to allow for and balance this with the pro-Moscow wing of the party.

The German Jusos heavily objected to the SPD's approval of the dual-track. In a resolution of its federal committee, the Jusos demanded the denunciation of the NATO decision to deploy new missiles. The resolution further dismissed any such stationing in the FRG or Western Europe; spoke in favour of an immediate ratification of SALT II as well as direct and unconditional negotiations on the basis of the existing status quo.[819] The Jusos heavily attacked the new Reagan-administration and its delaying of negotiations over intermediate range missiles as well as US imperialist policies in Latin America, Asia and Africa.[820] The Jusos' positioning over the matter was in fact more 'left-wing' and uncompromising than the PCI's. The German Young Socialists did not conceal their criticism against American (imperialist) foreign policies, and required an instant return to the negotiations table. In this, the Jusos were less constrained and inhibited. According to many in the SPD's youth organisation, there was no clear cut line between American imperialism and Soviet expansionism. The PCI's disapproval was more subtle and characterised by the primacy of détente whilst avoiding to be pinned down favouring a specific side. As such, it practised open condemnation of either side and criticised the ongoing armaments race. The comparison shows that there was not necessarily anything distinctively 'communist' or unyielding about the PCI's stance in the missile debate.

7.4) Pacifist movements in Italy and Germany

The dual-track decision caused one of the most fiercely and controversially debated foreign policy issues and security-related discussions within the SPD in its post-war history. The movement against Cruise missiles and Pershing 2 developed into the biggest mass movement in Europe since the Second World War thus far, with demonstrations involving millions of

[819] AdSD, Depositum Helmut Schmidt, 1/HS AA007790.
[820] Ibid.

people.[821] The missile debate involved the possibility of fighting a nuclear war. This prospect naturally elicited a reaction of extraordinary alarm not only on the part of the inhabitants of the countries where such a war was likely to take place or where new nuclear weapons would be deployed, but frightened the Western European population in general.

It also triggered one of the largest public debates in Western German society. After 1981, German resistance to the impending installation of new missiles was increasingly widespread across a broad spectrum of the population. In May 1981, some 800,000 peace activists had signed the 'Krefelder Initiative' - a letter to Schmidt demanding a withdrawal of the government's decision to agree on the deployment of Pershing 2 and Cruise missiles in Western Germany.[822] On 10 October 1981, some 350,000 people gathered in Bonn and demonstrated against Western rearmament in what became one of the largest demonstrations in the history of the Federal Republic.[823] The PCI's return to opposition limited its political weight in disagreeing with the INF decision. After the PCI's initial phase of moderate criticism of the missiles, the party moved closer to the pacifist groups. The PCI's role in the 1980-1983 anti-nuclear pacifist demonstrations was strong, but not comparable to the anti-NATO demonstrations of the 1950s or 1960s. It was characterised by a mutual condemnation of both NATO and Soviet missiles as an impediment to détente and a parallel denunciation of the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the 1981 Polish military coup against Solidarność.[824]

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[821] Kate Hudson, *European Communism since 1989. Towards a New European Left?* (Basingstoke, London: Macmillan Press, 2000), p. 29.
[822] 'The Krefelder Initiative', the letter to Schmidt was published in *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 15 May 1981, in AdSD, Depositum Helmut Schmidt, 1/HS AA 8000.
[823] Martin Rupps, *Troika wider Willen* (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 2004), p. 280.
[824] Rimanelli, *Italy between Europe and the Mediterranean*, p. 774.

A further consequence arising from the debate over rearmament was its reinforcement of a new 'green' movement. Even more alarming than pacifist sentiments across a politicised and activist society in the eyes of Schmidt, was the extending opposition within his own party.[825] No other foreign policy issue was so inextricably linked with inner German domestic policies like the question of INF-negotiations. Schmidt repeatedly related his own political destiny to the support of the dual-track.[826]

Schmidt's authority over the issue shrank enormously and his popularity and support within the SPD began increasingly to decline in 1982. The SPD was deeply divided over Schmidt's security policy. The unpopular decision to accept new US missiles in Germany had triggered a deep crisis within the SPD. This could only but affect the party's support and popularity in general.

8.) The end of détente

Two weeks after the NATO decision had been adopted, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. Though détente had been imperilled before, the invasion put an end to it, and made any possibility for East-West negotiations over the deployment of missiles in Europe seem unlikely for an uncertain period of time. The invasion strengthened supporters of the dual-track and undermined the Soviet credibility as to have a serious interest in negotiations. This profoundly reduced any room for manoeuvre for those who referred to Soviet benevolence, and who wished to ultimately avoid the deployment from 1983 onwards. The collapse of détente complicated and jeopardised the negotiations part of the NATO resolution, on which the SPD's fragile but ongoing support so fundamentally relied.

The question of Western reactions to the Soviet invasion led to a further rift between the United States and Germany. According to Carter, the Soviet military invasion marked the most profound violation of the process of détente and automatically involved the suspension

[825] Sodaro, *Moscow*, p. 277.
[826] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 391.

of the ratification of SALT II. Additionally, the American president urged NATO members to boycott the Moscow Olympics. Though Schmidt agreed with Carter on the gravity of the invasion on détente, he, along with his French counterpart D'Estaing, was anxious not to interrupt the dialogue with Moscow (and hence the negotiations over missile reductions).[827] To the PCI, the Soviet invasion marked a further strong setback and undermined the party's already little credible position on the missile debate. The invasion was instantly and unconditionally condemned as an act of Soviet aggression and expansionism, declaring that there was no justification for military interference in the domestic affairs of another country. The PCI underlined the gravity of the events by stressing that it was the first Soviet invasion outside the geographical area of the Warsaw Pact. Against the vote of one exception, Armando Cossutta, the military intervention was unequivocally condemned by the PCI.[828]

9.) The end of the social-liberal project in Germany and the failure of Italian communism

In the SPD, party critical voices against the deployment of new missiles after 1983 grew enormously in tone and numbers during 1982. With the failure to ratify SALT II, the given circumstances had changed drastically, which in turn required a policy reappraisal in the eyes of many Social Democrats. Analysing the period from summer 1982 to 1983, we observe a radical policy reversal from the SPD as a party of government to a party of opposition. The basis of support had been maintained due to the desire to remain in government. At the SPD's Party Congress in 1982, voices demanding a moratorium for the time of negotiations increased but a corresponding motion was narrowly dismissed.[829]

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[827] Loth, *Overcoming*, p. 163.
[828] Speech by Berlinguer to the European Parliament, 16 January 1980, in Berlinguer, *Discorsi parlamentari*, p. 348.
[829] AdSD, Depositum Helmut Schmidt, 1/HS AA007814.

The missile controversy had damaged the internal cohesion within the SPD and disagreements over budgetary priorities were strongly undermining the relationship with the FDP. By mid-1982, Genscher was ready to switch allegiance to the CDU.[830] This came to the fore in the summer of 1982 in a number of articles in German newspapers, in which the FDP expressed that it had become ever more reluctant to continue the coalition. This inevitably led to strong speculations that the FDP was openly seeking an overture toward the CDU/CSU.[831] Towards the autumn of 1982, critical voices in the FDP begun to publicly question the coalition with the SPD and to explore new convergences with the Conservatives.[832] Nonetheless, it would be oversimplifying and premature to argue that the coalition split over the NATO decision.[833] The matter was more complex. Beyond doubt, the euromissile debate confirmed existing foreign policy and security- related discrepancies in the coalition. However, the argument that the FDP was unanimously united over the missile debate is a simple myth. Genscher himself had to threaten to resign if his party failed to follow him on the question at the 1982 Party Congress of the FDP.[834] At the final vote, a quarter of the delegates rejected the idea of deploying new nuclear missiles in principle.[835] Despite a genuine Schmidt-Genscher agreement on the question, it became increasingly apparent that the chancellor was struggling to discipline his own party. Common ground for joint social-liberal projects amounted to very little. Without doubt, the SPD's growing unpopularity alarmed the FDP as well. After all, the

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[830] Sodaro, *Moscow*, p. 280.

[831] Helmut Schmidt's speech addressing the nation on 6 September 1982, re-printed in AdSD, Depositum Helmut Schmidt, 1/HS AA010598.

[832] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 392 and p. 394. One of the problems for the FDP was how to make the break with the SPD without destroying themselves in the process. Irving and Paterson held that by the spring of 1982 there was clearly a majority in the FDP parliamentary faction, led by Genscher and Lambsdorff, in favour of changing the coalition. On the subject see R.E.M. Irving and W.E. Paterson, 'The Machtwechsel of 1982-83: A Significant Landmark in the Political and Constitutional History of West Germany', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (1983), p. 426.

[833] See, for instance, Loth who argued that Genscher opted to switch coalition partners in 1982 partly because of the SPD's questioning of the resolution for the buildup; in *Overcoming*, p. 179.

[834] *Vorwärts*, 'Parteitag der Liberalen', 4 June 1981, in Press documentation of the German parliament, F 035-2/199.

[835] *Die Zeit*, 'Kalkulationen in Köln', 5 June 1981, in Press documentation of the German parliament, F 035-2/199. A resolution of the FDP's youth organisation to reject the stationing of nuclear missiles in Western Europe was undermined by a vote against it, in *Das Parlament*, 'FDP-Bundesparteitag 1981 in Köln', 13 June 1981, in Press documentation of the German parliament, F 035-2/199.

FDP was the 'smallest' party in the hitherto 'tripartite' German system, a party that had to constantly secure its own parliamentary survival by overcoming the necessary five percent hurdle.[836] But the final rupture of the coalition occurred over economic and budgetary policies.[837] The SPD utilised the missile question to end the cooperation with the FDP, a party with which it fundamentally diverged over economic questions and no longer wished to cooperate.[838] The same may of course be argued from a FDP perspective. Critical voices within the SPD had amplified, demanding an end of the coalition. Many held that the party could merely re-define itself from within parliamentary opposition. Part of this social democratic 'regeneration' would have to be an unequivocal dismissal of the NATO dual-track.[839] Schmidt later argued that the FDP, by terminating the social-liberal project on its own demand, wished to prove that it was, despite its size, the linchpin of the coalition.[840] Once forced to return to the opposition benches, the SPD had liberated itself from all remaining constraints and subsequently pursued a line of strongest objection against the dual-track. On a national level, however, the SPD became increasingly marginalised after 1983. For an uncertain period of time, the SPD was left without a viable coalition alternative and its centre-left monopoly became increasingly challenged by the birth and growth of the Green Party.

A few years earlier, the Italian Communists' decline set in: from 1979 onwards, the PCI's history became characterised by dwindling electoral decline, decreasing membership and political marginalisation.[841] To trace the PCI's 'crisis' to the party's isolation over the dual-track would be oversimplifying. The PCI's marginalisation had set in well before that. In fact,

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[836] It should be noted though that after the 1980 election the 'Green problem' became ever more threatening to the SPD. A 'fourth' party had arrived on the political stage and the SPD was in difficulty to deal with this newcomer.
[837] Interview with Bahr, 1 June 2007.
[838] Interview with Voigt, 16 June 2008.
[839] Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen II*, p. 393.
[840] Helmut Schmidt, *Eigentlich wollte ich Städtebauer werden*. Helmut Schmidt im Gespräch mit Ulrich Wickert (Stuttgart, Leipzig: Hohenheim Verlag, 2001), pp. 60-61.
[841] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 585.

the party's position over the missile debate, had it been different, would not have substantially altered its political stalemate.

After the failure of the historic compromise formula, the PCI was engaged in an uncertain and partly inconsequent process of re-defining its nature, political path and programme. On 27 November 1980, after an earthquake had hit Italy and devastated large parts of the Irpinia in the South on 23 November, Berlinguer sought the occasion to finally renounce the PCI's willingness to cooperate with the DC. The earthquake of course only marked the external impetus for the PCI to change its political and social alliance strategy, yet again. The historic compromise was finally abandoned in favour of the somewhat vague strategy of a 'democratic alternative', which in essence meant that cooperation with the DC was replaced in favour of a renewed partnership with the Italian Socialists. The peculiarity of this strategy was not the abandonment of the DC as its preferred partner or as its 'centre of attention', or the concept's vagueness as a matter of fact, but that it was expressed at a time, when the PSI did not conceal its very disinterest in cooperation with the PCI. The PCI's change of strategy in favour of the PSI therefore came more than surprising, given the fact that the Italian Socialists under Craxi's leadership went at great lengths to create an identity distinctive from the PCI. At the same time, the DC prepared the ground for a new centre-left and to re-establish the links with the Socialists under Craxi.[842] A renewed centre-left coalition eventually emerged in 1980.

The outcome of the missiles debate only further underlined the PCI's political marginalisation. This isolation was not, as yet, so much expressed in terms of voters and members as in a lack of alliance strategies. By proposing a 'democratic alternative' or 'left-wing alternative', whatever one may term it, but essentially a governmental alliance strategy without the DC, the PCI simply admitted that it had exploited its strategic options to the fullest. Not only was there little practicability to the proposed model, but it was also unclear in which direction the PCI was heading.

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[842] Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party*, p. 232.

During numerous occasions, Berlinguer attempted to explain that the PCI was seeking a 'third way' towards socialism. Whilst the Soviet model, whose great achievements were still sporadically acknowledged, was an inappropriate type for Italy (not a novelty), European social democracy, having achieved certain improvements, did not go far enough to overcome the capitalist system.[843] By reforming the capitalist system, Social Democrats, so the PCI argued, simply accommodated the system, without helping to overcome its inherent contradictions and injustices. Whereas Social Democrats would always move within the confines of the system, the PCI intended to replace it.

The fact that the path followed in Russia was not practicable for advancing towards socialism in societies where capitalism was more fully developed was not new, and can be directly traced back to the party's theoretical foundations as envisaged by Gramsci. The overcoming of capitalism was still the 'end goal', though the means of how the building of a socialist society - with full respect, guarantee and protection of democratic liberties by parliamentary means - was to be achieved, remained obscure and as cryptic as ever.

Of course, parties of opposition have the advantage of being able 'to afford' being more vague and unclear about their programmes, whilst benefiting from underlying the failure of their political opponents in government. Parties of government are also always more directly measured by their success and by sticking to their governmental programmes or coalition pacts. While the PCI may have benefited from this in the past, by the beginning of the 1980s it was ever more uncertain which path it would follow next.

By pointing out the inappropriateness of the Soviet system as a transferable model for the West (or Italy) and the weakness and contradictions of social democracy or social democratic parties in Western Europe, the PCI avoided being specific about its own programme and political identity. Then again, one could argue that it was precisely and paradoxically the Italian political scene which had induced the PCI to keep its (ambivalent) communist identity.

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[843] 'Berlinguer in an interview with Giampaolo Pansa', 28 May 1979, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 108.

A *de facto* (and in name) social-democratisation of the PCI (which in political practise had in many ways already occurred) would have rendered the PCI little distinguishable from its other opponents of the Italian Left. With benefit of hindsight, it would have led to a split of the party and merger into a social democratic party (and a smaller communist splinter group).

In the late 1970s, this was not as yet desirable. At the same time one could argue that the party's ambivalent identity, the existence of a 'left' and a 'right' wing, of 'Soviet-hard liners' and 'reformers' within the PCI, was in fact already a characteristic feature of a people's party of the Left and expressive of the social-democratisation process that slowly occurred within the party. A brief look at the SPD during the same time shows that the party was painfully divided into a left and a right wing over security policies. It is an inherent characteristic of social democratic parties to be divided between traditionalists and modernisers.

Returning to the PCI, while for an attentive observer of the party this process may well have been under way, the party stuck to its communist heritage for another decade. In order not to turn into a social democratic party – when in fact little was left that distinguished the PCI from the latter in terms of foreign and security-related policy programmes – the PCI reiterated its sort of historical and ideological link with its communist heritage by not dismissing the rewards of the October Revolution entirely. To explain this solely by referring to the grass-root militants that the leadership did not want to further alienate, is not sufficient. Despite the leadership's repeated insistence on the PCI's pro-Western alignment and moderate party outlook, the past and present link, however uncertain, to the Soviet Union remained, even minimally, important to the party's identity in the 1980s. If the PCI did not wish to 'dissolve' into a Western European type of social democratic party, which it is assumed that at this stage it had no intention to, then some (even if highly uncertain and ambivalent) link with the Soviet Union needed to be maintained.[844] This was the furthest the PCI had moved in

[844] In an interview with the German weekly *Stern*, Berlinguer declared in August 1979 that he 'did not feel Social Democratic but Communist (...) and that the PCI's autonomy and independence from the Soviet Union

clarifying its identity by the beginning of the 1980s. Finally, one may suggest, and this was noticeable particularly in the context of the SPD's re-identification as entailed in the Godesberg Programme, political parties tend to re-think their nature, identity, strategies and programmes from within parliamentary opposition and as a result of continuous electoral setback and without any feasible prospects for the future. Despite a noticeable onset of a decline (after the 1979 election), the PCI, at the beginning of the 1980s was, still a comparatively stable and, electorally speaking, strong and well established party. One may only speak of a serious drop-back or phase of electoral stagnation by the 1987 election, when the party lost three points compared to 1983 (1987: 26.6 percent; 1983: 29.9 percent). After all, it took traditionalists within the SPD two subsequent electoral defeats to acknowledge the need for and reformers to push through change. In the 'long' decade of the 1980s, the PCI embarked upon its own road to 'Bad Godesberg'. The electoral setbacks of 1983 and 1987 led reformers within the PCI to speed up the process of transformation, which was ultimately 'justified' and perhaps further legitimised, by international events at the beginning of the 1990s. The two go hand in hand; the process was prompted by internal and justified by international circumstances. The irony is that as the Soviet empire dissolved, the Communists became viable electoral partners, but their tiny size meant that they were no longer relevant.[845]

A last aspect should not go unmentioned: much as national elections are not 'won' on foreign policy programmes solely, it would be oversimplifying to argue that the PCI's failure to enter government may be exclusively attributed to its ambivalent relations with the CPSU or to the Cold War framework. Although international adversaries preferably pointed to the PCI's foreign policies ambivalences (and that a communist government in Italy would most likely act as Soviet satellite) when referring to its alleged democratic illegitimacy, these factors only

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(whose system the PCI had not intention to adopt) was complete'. Re-printed in *L'Unità*, 17 August 1979, in APC, Fondo Berlinguer, Varie 108.

[845] David S. Bell, introduction to David S. Bell (ed.), *Western European Communists and the Collapse of Communism* (Oxford/Providence: Berg, 1993), p. 11.

partially, if not minorily, accounted for the PCI's failure.[846] A number of reasons led to the PCI's electoral demise after 1979. Uncertainties in the party's programme (whereas in the past the PCI's imprecision may in fact have been beneficial) and identity, doubts about its relations with the Soviet Union together with a lack of results in the party's alliance strategies as envisaged in the historic compromise or the democratic alternative, as well as having become a party *of the system* between 1976-79 (being identified with much of its corruption) - contributed to a decline in support for the PCI. It was in those years that the PCI had lost most of its previously gained prestige.

[846] After all one should remember that the PCF participated in government from 1981 to 1984, although very much as a junior partner.

Conclusions

The comparative approach between the SPD and the PCI is interesting and revealing because similarities existed well beyond the minimum of commonalities necessary for a comparison. Beyond the minimal convergences, the thesis demonstrated that the two parties, in spite of underlying ideological and dogmatic differences, converged over and shared a number of similar foreign policy perceptions. It showed that the SPD and the PCI held converging conceptions in more foreign policy fields than one may have assumed.

On a domestic level, these commonalities evolved around the desire to assume governmental responsibility, the coming to terms with Christian democratic hegemony and the challenges and constraints of parliamentary democracy as well as the adaptation to political, economic and social circumstances. Though admittedly to a different extent, both parties faced similar problems and constraints in their attempt to become responsible governing partners and to varying degrees, both came to embrace the features of government-oriented parties, attributing more weight to pragmatism than ideological adherence.

One general assumption that can be drawn from this comparison is that every so often, consensus-seeking politics weaken the very idea of ideological adherence. Electoral fortunes depend much upon the ability to adapt to changes and to exploit the peculiarities of party political competition, though more so in Italy due to the largely unprecedented heterogeneity of the political structure. In systems of proportional representation, election results are every so often secondary if a party fails to find a coalition partner or be imbedded in a governmental alliance. National political parties generally act and react in a specific domestic context, in response to social and economic circumstances, to electoral considerations, ambitions and to political competition. After all, political parties are predominantly measured by 'success'.

This pattern of dealing with the various demands of parliamentary competition. electoral interests, national constraints and international obligations marked the red thread and perspective from which the developments of the SPD and the PCI were analysed.

On an international level, both were affected by the Cold War and attempted to originate a foreign policy that took firmly into account the international context. This involved a move to bipartisanship in foreign policy terms in general, and a reappraisal towards NATO in particular. Despite the existence of ideological differences, both came to embrace bipartisanship in foreign policy and attempted to originate foreign policy concepts that went well beyond the mere acceptance of the status quo and sought to replace the existing bipolar order. The peculiarity of the PCI of course was that it found itself in an apparently insoluble dilemma of preserving the minimal core of what it meant to be a communist party, including close ties with Moscow, without at the same time relinquishing forever its chance to mount the seats of power. Any analysis of PCI history must necessarily take into consideration this dual nature, or conversely, PCI historiography can only be comprehensive when contemplating both the national and the international context.

Any study on West European communism during the period of analysis is inevitably also a study on the Cold War, and any study on the SPD's foreign policy necessarily involves an analysis of German-German relations and Ostpolitik. Given the international framework in which the SPD and the PCI operated, both were more directly affected by the Cold War than other Western European political parties. This is why the SPD's and PCI's foreign policy course must unavoidably be examined against the context of the Cold War and détente. Yet, focusing on the Cold War and bipolar issues exclusively, as much of the English speaking scholarship has done, provides an incomplete picture. The comparative method exemplifies a more comprehensive study of SPD and PCI history. A study of the PCI and the SPD as well

as their relations can expand our understanding of the Cold War: it reveals the tight interconnection and interdependence between local and global politics. PCI and SPD historiography needs to show an awareness of the links between the local and global levels.

The choice of the two at first sight very different political forces was revealing and insightful for a number of reasons: first of all, the comparative method bore the advantage of demonstrating that the SPD's and the PCI's reappraisal towards NATO was strikingly similar. Both occurred in the context of seeking power at home. Similarly so, the PCI's and SPD's re-thinking of the pros and cons of the European integration process. Here even the timing bore remarkable resemblance. The thesis offered a more comprehensive understanding of the origins and motivations behind foreign policy revisionism. Key to their revisionism was the acknowledged necessity of seeking foreign policy convergences with the other national parties and of the unfruitfulness of maintaining unpopular positions at home (i.e. over NATO and European integration).

Secondly, the methodological approach chosen here allowed me to arrive at more general conclusions about policy revisionism. Moreover, it manifested that national political interests and demands coincided with international constraints and obligations to the extent that it is no longer possible to speak of positions that were particularly 'communist' or 'socialist' or 'social democratic'. National power politics undermine the preservation of particular bloc politics.

Both the international context as well as domestic questions shaped the decision-making processes of the PCI and the SPD. This led to a convergence of perceptions on détente, and the desire to untangle the existing bloc rigidities which in turn accumulated in direct SPD-PCI relations in 1967/68. Both agreed that at least a temporary 'settlement' of the German

problem would lead to the much desired relaxation of military tensions and pave the way for the CSCE. Nationally isolated and 'hostage' to a domestic Cold War, the PCI realised that it had to actively move away from static détente and find conceptual solutions to its national stalemate and increasingly marginal role in Italian politics – marginal at least as far as the coming to power was concerned. The SPD, keen to actively de-freeze inner German tensions, sought contacts with the PCI to launch new dynamics in the East-West relations. In this context, the thesis sought to challenge existing research that attributed the initiative of talks to the PCI (Timmermann, *I Comunisti italiani*). At first, the SPD wished to examine the impact of its own course on the East; in doing so, the PCI came in handy. It is unlikely that the PCI had something to offer to the SPD that would have triggered talks at PCI initiative. The SPD wished to transmit a more balanced picture of its interests to Moscow, and the PCI, having a particular national interest in détente, seized the opportunity to increase its own standing.

Though European détente was provoked by the initiation of Ostpolitik and led to the desired treaties with the East as well as an improvement of FRG-GDR relations in terms of trade and humanitarian questions, it did not bring about the much desired change of attitude towards Western European communist parties. East-West détente ran parallel to a continuation of domestic Cold Wars. The absence of changes in Italy pressured the PCI to foster and speed up its own conceptual changes (NATO, Eurocommunism, internationalism). International and national hostility made it more urgent for the party to shift its positions and present itself as a realistic government partner. The SPD's political stalemate prior to the great coalition and the PCI's launch of the historic compromise strategy thus bear remarkable resemblance.

In spite of a significant reappraisal of some of its domestic and foreign policy decisions (historic compromise, security policies, relations with the CPSU), PCI strategy at home seemed to have reached a dead end. Though on the one hand the PCI's national isolation led

to some U-turns that were largely unprecedented amongst Western European communist parties, and led to a rapprochement with certain aspects of Western European social democracy, the PCI felt the limits of East-West détente more directly than most other parties. On the other hand, one cannot trace the PCI's failure to enter government to the international situation exclusively. Many of the reasons can be found in the peculiarity and heterogeneity of the Italian domestic scene and the PCI's failure to render itself indispensable.

The thesis also sought to make sense of the paradox that international hostility towards the PCI accumulated at a time when the party made the utmost effort to prove its democratic credentials. Perhaps this was precisely one of the reasons that strengthened international suspicion. This is also particularly interesting as far as the complexity of SPD-PCI relations was concerned. This study attempted to place the PCI's situation in 1976 in the wider context of Western reactions on the one hand, whilst keeping firmly in mind the party's relation with the SPD on the other. While direct SPD-PCI contacts were fostered at the end of the 1960s, relations seemingly deteriorated in the mid-1970s. At the same time, the thesis sought to offer an alternative reading of the Puerto Rico incident and thereby challenge and contribute to some of the existing literature. There was neither a coherent and coordinated strategy against a PCI participation in government nor was Schmidt's advance discussed within or shared by his party. On the contrary, SPD-PCI relations continued on various levels after the bilateral phase of Ostpolitik had been accomplished. The reasons for Schmidt's declaration in July 1976 must be sought in the domestic situation prior to the national elections and the statement was not shared, let alone supported by Britain or France. SPD relations with the PCI were certainly constrained by the Cold War context in the wider sense and by the peculiarities of the German situation in particular as well as by direct experiences of many Social Democrats with the SED after the Second World War. The thesis attempted to provide one interpretation of SPD-PCI relations but there is certainly room for further research in the field.

The comparison of the SPD and the PCI also sought to demonstrate the high correlation between domestic choices and international obligations. Their debate over the NATO dual-track decision provided an illustrative case of the study between the considerable correlations of international decisions and domestic policies and complexities. Moreover, it showed that the debate can only be fully comprehended when emphasising the primacy of domestic politics and the national context. Finally, the euromissile debate suggests that the two parties' positions produced more similarities and shared more common ground than initially assumed. The SPD's and the PCI's position over the dual-track were strikingly similar when viewed from an internal party perspective; when analysed from an official party level, their choices were shaped by international obligations, domestic demands and inner party constraints. It demonstrates the tight interconnection between local and global politics and offers a more thorough understanding of some of the decision-making processes during the Cold War.

The idea behind this comparative approach was to open up new perspectives of partly familiar subjects by analysing the Cold War context and the development of détente from the perspective of two major Western European forces. As such, the thesis sought to complement on existing research such as Timmermann's approach of analysing the PCI from a German Social Democratic perspective. At the same time, it sought to challenge the idea that communist party behaviour can be almost exclusively explained through the prism of the Cold War. A strong case can be made that both parties' decisions were strongly shaped by a mutual desire to come to power. It can equally be maintained that both parties, though to varying degrees, had become revisionist parties that faced similar challenges in a bipolar world. Analysing the PCI from a Cold War perspective or as a member of the Soviet dominated communist movement does not sufficiently and adequately account for the complex character of this party. Comparative communist studies do not reveal anything substantially new other than generally proving that the PCI was a radical and innovative party if compared with, for

example the PCF, which remained fairly Stalinist throughout. Any comprehensive study of the PCI must be sufficiently intricate to deal with the differing aspects of PCI identity. The analysis presented here has the advantage of examining foreign policy choices against the international context whilst keeping in mind the national context. A comparison with the SPD is therefore particularly revealing in as far as it contests some of the previously written histories on the PCI by providing a more comprehensive picture. At the same time it showed that some, though by no means all, of the SPD's developments were strikingly similar. In essence, the thesis attempted to reinterpret some of the parties' decisions by taking into account international and national aspects and thereby arriving at a more comprehensive understanding of policy revisionism. It is the comparison that allows one to make more general assumptions rather than attributing all changes solely to the particular circumstances of *a* party.

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Appendix 1

Membership figures for the SPD and the PCI, 1956–1979

	SPD	PCI
1956		2,035,353
1957	626,189	1,825,342
1958		1,818,606
1959	634,254	1,789,269
1960		1,792,974
1961	644,780	1,728,620
1962		1,630,550
1963	648,415	1,630,000
1964	678,484	1,615,296
1965	710,448	
1966	727,890	1,575,935
1967	733,004	1,534,705
1968	732,446	1,502,862
1969	778,945	1,503,816
1970	820,202	1,507,047
1971	847,456	1,521,642
1972	954,394	1,584,659
1973		1,623,082
1974	957,253	1,657,825
1975		1,730,453
1976	1,022,191	1,814,263
1977	1,006,316	1,814,154
1978	997,444	1,790,450
1979		1,761,297

Sources: Bracke, *Which socialism, Whose détente?*, p. 375; *Jahrbücher der SPD 1957-1979*

Note: For some years, no figures are given

Appendix 2

Electoral results for the SPD and the PCI, 1948-1987

	SPD	PCI
1946		
1948		
1949	29.2	
1953	28.8	
1957	31.8	
1958		22.7
1961	36.2	
1963		25.3
1965	39.3	
1968		26.9
1969	42.7	
1972	45.8	27.8
1976	42.6	34.4
1979		30.4
1980	42.9	
1983	38.2	

Sources: Potthoff, Miller, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, p. 449; Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, p. 442.

Appendix 3

Votes cast in elections to the Chamber of Deputies, 1948-87

	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968
PSIUP, PDUP, DP[a]	-	-	-	-	4.4
PCI	-	22.6	22.7	25.3	26.9
Popular Front	31.0	-	-	-	-
PSI	-	12.7	14.2	13.8	-
PSU	-	-	-	-	14.5
PSDI	7.1	4.5	4.6	6.1	-
Republican Party	2.5	1.6	1.4	1.4	2.0
DC	48.5	40.1	42.4	38.3	39.1
Liberal Party	3.8	3.0	3.5	7.0	5.8
Monarchist Party	2.8	6.9	4.9	1.7	1.3
MSI, MSI-DN[b]	2.0	5.8	4.8	5.1	4.4
Others with seats	1.1	0.5	1.1	0.5	0.5
Others without seats	1.3	2.3	0.5	0.8	1.0

	1972	1976	1979	1983	1987
PSIUP, PDUP, DP[a]	1.9	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.7
Greens	-	-	-	-	2.5
Radical Party	-	1.1	3.4	2.2	2.6
PCI	27.1	34.4	30.4	29.9	26.6
PSI	9.6	9.6	9.8	11.4	14.3
PSDI	5.1	3.4	3.8	4.1	3.0
Republican Party	2.9	3.1	3.0	5.1	3.7
DC	38.7	38.7	38.3	32.9	34.3
Liberal Party	3.9	1.3	1.9	2.9	2.1
MSI and PMN	8.7	6.1	-	-	-
MSI, MSI-DN[b]	-	-	5.3	6.8	5.9
Others with seats	0.6	0.6	0.8	1.2	1.6
Others without seats	1.5	0.2	1.8	2.1	1.9

[a] PSIUP in 1968 and in 1972; PDUP in 1979; DP in 1976, 1983 and 1987.
[b] MSI-DN in 1979
Source: Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, p. 442.

Appendix 4

Votes cast in elections to the German parliament, 1949-1987

	1949	**1953**	**1957**	**1961**	**1965**	**1969**	**1972**	**1976**	**1980**	**1983**	**1987**
CDU/ CSU	31.0	45.2	50.2	45.3	47.6	46.1	45.8	48.6	44.5	48.8	44.3
SPD	29.2	28.8	31.8	36.2	39.3	42.7	44.9	42.6	42.9	38.2	37.0
FDP	11.9	9.5	7.7	12.8	9.5	5.8	8.4	7.9	10.6	7.0	9.1
Grüne									1.5	5.6	8.3

Source: Potthoff, Miller, *Kleine Geschichte der SPD*, p. 312.

Appendix 5

SPD and PCI Party Leaders since 1945

SPD Party Leaders

Kurt Schumacher	May 1946 – August 1952
Erich Ollenhauer	September 1952 – December 1963
Willy Brandt	February 1964 – March 1987

PCI Party Leaders

Palmiro Togliatti	1944[a] – August 1964
Luigi Longo	January 1966 – March 1972
Enrico Berlinguer	March 1972 – 1984

[a]1944 is chosen as it is the year when Togliatti returned from Moscow.

Appendix 6

List of Abbreviations

AA	Auswärtiges Amt (Federal Foreign Office)
APC	Archivio Partito Comunista (Italiano)
AdSD	Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie bei der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
CC	Central Committee
CDU	Christlich-Demokratische Union (Christian Democratic Union)
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (the communist-socialist Italian trade union)
CLN	Committee of National Liberation
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
COMINFORM	The Soviet-installed Information Bureau
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSU	Christliche-Soziale Union (Christian Social Union)
DC	Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democratic Party)
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (German trade union federation)
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EP	European Parliament
ERP	European Recovery Programme
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Foundation)
FGCI	Federazione giovanile comunista italiano (Italian Communist Youth Federation)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GDP	Gross Domestic Product

ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (Communist Party of Germany)
LRTNF	Long-Range Theatre Nuclear Forces
MBFR	Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction
MLF	Multilateral Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist German Workers Party)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party)
PCF	Parti Communiste Français (French Communist Party)
PCP	Communist Party of Portugal
PDS	Partito Democratico della Sinistra (Democratic Party of the Left)
PLI	Partito Liberale Italiano (Italian Liberal Party)
PRI	Partito Repubblicano Italiano (Italian Republican Party)
PS	Parti Socialiste (Français) (French Socialist Party)
PSDI	Partito Social-Democratico Italiano (Italian social-democratic Party)
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano (Italian Socialist Party)
PSIUP	Partito Socialista di Unità Proletario (Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity)
PV	Parteivorstand der SPD (SPD Party Executive)
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitations Talks
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of Germany)
SI	Socialist International
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (German Social Democratic Party)
WBA	Willy Brandt Archiv
WCM	World Communist Movement
WEU	Western European Union

Appendix 7

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